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A detailed black and white illustration of various leaves and a small bird. The leaves are of different shapes, some with prominent veins, and are scattered around the title. A small bird is perched on a branch among the leaves.

IN THE VALHALLA

and other Poems

IN THE VALHALLA.



IN THE VALHALLA,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

JAMES YOUNG GEDDES,

AUTHOR OF

“The New Jerusalem,” “The Spectre Clock of Aylth,” &c.

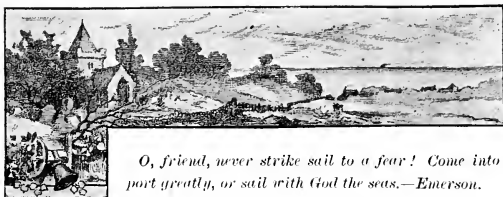
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*O, friend, never strike sail to a fear ! Come into
port greatly, or sail with God the seas.—Emerson.*

*I KNEEL beside the sounding sea
To set my little bark adrift,
But small impulse it needs from me,
Then for itself the bark must shift.*

*O, little bark, that brav'st the sea,
On board thee I have placed my best,
In hope some hearts akin to me
May give thee anchorage and rest.*

*Yet ask I not for favouring gale,
For stormless track on glassy sea ;
Thou for thyself must sink or sail
With no avail in prayer from me.*

*And if amid the ocean's drift
A waif rejected thou shalt be—
A thing the winds have backward whiffed—
The mockery of the scornful sea ;*

*So be it : nobler barks than thee
Have foundered in a freshening gale,
The searching wrath of storm and sea
Discovering worthless spar or sail.*

*Yet ere my bark floats from my view,
What'er the issue be to me,
Detectors of the false and true—
I hail you friends, O Storm and Sea !*

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POEMS.



In the Valhalla.

ONCE in dreamland by the spirit led beyond the body's
thrall

Stood I in the hallowed precincts of a vast cathedral hall,

Where the sunlight through the windows, brightly stained
in gold and red,

Fell in aureoles of glory on the statues of the dead—

Dead whose names are graven deeply on the world's scroll of
fame ;

Mighty men of deathless valour, mighty men of deathless
shame.

Sages, heroes, warriors, statesmen, men in art and science
great ;

Poets, minstrels, and musicians, ancient kings in robes of
State,

Stood upright or lay recumbent, with their hands upon their
breast,

As awaiting an awakening from their unperturbed rest.

O, I felt so weak, unworthy, 'mid these mighty ones of
earth,

Dreading lest the lurking Presence should arise and drive
me forth—

That dread Presence which subdues us in the sepulchre
abodes,

Where in holy shrines and temples are the gods and demi-
gods.

But a feeling of oppression came upon me as I gazed
Where the sculptor's subtle fingers had these images
upraised ;

The oppression of the silence, like a suffocating snow,
Brooding as the silence brooded o'er the world in embryo.

Imaged all like to the Godhead, only I could utter prayer,
In that silent congregation not a single worshipper.

O ye faces, wan and ghostly, with the lifeless, stony stare,
Not another bosom throbbing with a hope or a despair.

O the folly, O the madness, when the living soul is fled,
To revive the outward huskings in this mocking masquerade.

The Egyptian with embalming robbed oblivion for a day ;
Is our art the wiser, saner, though it deals with harder clay ?

In the abundance of the summer there is plenty on the plain ;
Why encumber it in semblance with the sickled garnered
grain ?

I will leave you, dark Golgotha, place of shadow infinite ;
I will consort with the living in the generating light.

For the manhood rises in me in a passionate protest
In iconoclastic frenzy at this worship of the Best ;

This despisal, flaunting, flagrant, of the lowly and the meek—
Of the weakness in the greatest, of the greatness in the
weak.

Why this gross and partial choosing, O ye darlings of the
race ?
In a worthier Valhalla would ye only find a place ?

The effulgence of your glory—surely it is dearly bought,
If they blacken for its background all that with you lived
and wrought.

O ye statues, cold, majestic, O ye marble forms of grace ;
Ye colossal, adamantine sculptured slanders on the race—

Speak forth boldly, O my manhood, cry to each pretentious
stone—

“Man is only great in common, man is never great alone.”

O ye kings, still grimly clutching at the show of royalty,
Was your kingdom really greater than unswerving loyalty ?

O ye conquerors, ye commanders, what of all the thousands
slain,
Who in the arduous battle bore the burden and the pain.

O inventors, your inventions, while they may have many
blest,
Made the few in silence suffer for the welfare of the rest.

O the golden thoughts and molten in the poet's crucible ;
He can only from o'erflowings of the common heart distil.

What do ye here, O warriors of the patriotic rage ?
What ye lived for, what ye died for, was the common
heritage.

O ye priests, ye faithful shepherds, from simplicity betrayed—
From the flock ye guarded God-like, why have ye hither
strayed ?

O my kindred, I may give you love, affection, sympathy ;
Not this servile adulation, not this vain idolatry.

I will shun thee, O Valhalla ; rather seeking the churchyard,
Where the air of heaven blows freshly on a rank, neglected
sward—

Where the gentle undulations on the mighty Mother's breast
Tell, without thy ostentation, of the wearied wooed to rest.

Ah ! those lives of quiet endurance lived without the world's
gaze,
'Chance they needed less of censure, and were worthier far
of praise.

O the lonely hero's struggle against fiercely adverse fate,
With his brief memorials written on the splintering slab of
slate,

Where the rough and rustic artist, with his hieroglyphics
rude,
Makes no wild and wanton outrage on the common brother-
hood.

O dear, Almighty Mother, in thy mild and equal mood,
Thou hast no foolish favours for the darlings of the brood ;

For all the same warm coverlet, and for all the kind
embrace,
Thou shelter from the storm of life, thou last, best hiding
place.

Thrift ! Thrift ! Thrift !

THRIFT, thrift, thrift,
This is the hateful word
Flung at us every day,
When we ask for some regard
In the shape of a little more pay ;
Thrift, thrift, thrift !
It is thrown us from the press,
It is thrown from the pulpit, too ;
Never a word, or more or less,
Like the notes of a cuckoo—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
The beggar at the gate
Of Dives in the days of old
Had long in patience to wait
An-hungered and a-cold ;
Yet happier he, no doubt,
Than we, in his pitiful shift,
For the rich man came not out
To lecture him on thrift.
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

As in shoals we workers go
In the meal hour to and fro,

The rich man's coach rolls by
With his wife in all her pride,
With her happy family
And a pampered pug at her side.
The dog has lost the trick
Of soothing the social sores ;
On crumbs he no longer feeds ;
He has servants for his needs,
And a surgeon when he is sick ;
He, too, his wrath outpours
At the beggar at the gate,
And yelps at the unfortunate—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
The widow day and night
May never her efforts relax—
Sewing the obdurate sacks
To earn her weekly mite.
As she sews, the swish of the thread
Goes singing in her head—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !
It is clattered from the loom,
It is rattled from the reels,
As they fly the busy wheels
Buzz it out like a word of doom—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !
'Tis the steampipe's warning boom,

And the bells that ring us in,
In our ears for ever din,
From the cradle to the tomb—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

All week we plan and scrimp
How we may our pittance spend,
Till body and brain grow limp
While at our toil we bend.
Something for food, something for rent,
And something, too, for clothes we save,
One penny, at least, may not be spent—
The penny that buys the grave.
How pleasant when work is done,
Ere our working garb we shift,
To sit at home and meditate on
An engrossing essay on thrift.
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
Why are we here at all
To beg and bother and bawl
For a little more paltry pence ?
From nothing why bring us hence ?
What made our parents woo ?
What made our parents wed,
When there was little enough for two
Of the butterless daily bread ?
Had they been sane and wise,

Had they only been people of worth,
They should have known that their mission on earth
Was but to economise.
Thrift, thrift, thrift!

Thrift, thrift, thrift!
Was the Almighty in haste
When he made us who wages win?
He left such an outlet for waste
When he threw the affections in.
If working machines we are,
We should have been soulless too,
To go on without a jar
Till broken up and through,
To go on from week to week
Without a murmur at toil;
Yet even a machine will creak
If it gets too little oil.
Thrift, thrift, thrift!

The angels lifted the ban
From the blighted world below
When the Christian era began,
Nigh two thousand years ago;
Then the song was given forth
To the herds on Bethlehem's plain,
And unto the listening earth,
Of peace and goodwill to men,

But never a word of thrift,
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Had they no perception dim
Of the needs of working folk
In the far-off social drift ?
Was there none of the seraphim,
With an apprehensive croak,
To throw in the warning note
That in the future toiler's lot
Salvation lay in thrift ?
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
And yet in the evening sky
The stars are freely strewn.
In the by-paths liberally
The wayside flowers are sown.
The rain and the glad sunshine
Fall alike on bad and good.
Chance He, the Master Divine,
May not be of a miser mood,
May have more for the working drudge
Than that word of greed and grudge ;
And when from this scene we shift,
Perhaps in a land of bliss
And sweet forgetfulness
We may in felicity
Be allowed to wander free,

Without a suggestion of thrift.
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
Easy it is for thee,
Serene philosopher,
With the cheap philosophy,
From out of thy sheltered sphere
To utter forth the parrot cry—
The Levite benedicite—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !
Easy it is for thee
To shout to the worn and weak,
Out on the wild, where the bleak
Cold blasts of adversity
Beat on the defenceless head,
Easy it is for thee to cry
“ Be clothed, be warm, be fed ”—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !

Thrift, thrift, thrift !
Benign philosopher,
Forbear, forbear !
No more of thy cheap philosophy.
If the laws of demand and supply,
And the maxims of the mart,
Have left thee still a heart—
If their lives are a grim necessity,
Leave them alone to suffer and bear.

By the common blood that warms
Our frames and their stunted forms,
Treat not these brothers of mine,
Treat not these sisters of thine,
With insult and with mockery.
Thrift, thrift, thrift !
Or if thou must repeat
The lesson learned by rote,
Go with thy message elsewhere—
Go where there is wealth and to spare,
As one that hath been smote
By a burning message from God ;
Enter the proud abode,
Where the gay and thoughtless meet,
And shout in the ear of Dives,
“ For the sake of miserable lives—
Thrift, thrift, thrift !”



A Common Affair.

'TIS nothing rare,
Just a common affair,
A sale on the street !
And the household effects
Lie scattered about ;
Not a large display
Or furniture show,
By no means, no.
The eye detects
Traces of squalor everywhere.
The bedding and bee
Are in ruin complete ;
From the easy chair
The stuffing's out ;
The fender's shattered ;
The table battered,
Shakes as if sick
Or paralytic—
There is nothing perfect, nothing neat.

A common affair !
The auctioneer
Has a knowing leer,
And a fund of rare

Old, full-bodied Greenmarket wit ;
And the crowd
Responds with the laughter loud
That tallies it.
Heaven help us all !
A penny for this, twopence for that
Old worm-eaten cupboard a starving rat
Would gnaw with scorn.
Passers come and passers quit,
And still the ancient jibe and jeer
Moves the lips of the auctioneer,
And still in ripples rise and fall
The answering smiles,
As he wiles
The bidders on, to bode or buy
The musty and worn,
Ragged and torn
Things that lie
In ruin complete
On the open street.

A common affair !
And nothing rare—
And yet, what have we scattered here
In the dirt and dust ?
A derelict home—
A total wreck.
Whence has it come ?

Where has it from its moorings drifted ?
Why has thus its cargo shifted ?
Was ever the ark securely cabled ?
Are captain or crew or all disabled ?
Did the gust
Of angry passions sweep clean the deck ?
And the wares aground—have they been drenched
In the brine that sears ?
Have the household fires been drowned and quenched
In a storm of tears ?

A common affair !
Why philosophize
On a theme so slight ?
If you use your eyes
'Tis a sight
That will often meet you,
That may daily greet you.
Is the home of a couple stranded here ?
Then never fear,
The couple themselves were much to blame ;
If shame was theirs, they deserved the shame.
Let us think—
Was it drink ?
Most likely so.
'Tis drink we know
That explains so well the evil hitches,
The knots and holes and dropped-out stitches

In the social web,
To drink are due
The abandoned babe,
The crazed lunatic,
The man erratic.
Drink fires our pates,
Drink raises rates—
What is it the vile thing does not do ?
Yes, let us pause,
And give the cause
Of the mishap here,
And write it down as undoubtedlly clear,
'Twas the wretched drink.

A common affair !
And yet and yet
Can we e'er forget
The bygone happy pairing time ?
With ecstasy
The birds we see
Gather their stores of twigs and lime,
And we hear,
With delighted ear,
As we walk abroad
In the realm of song
Hymeneal carols loud and long ;
And we rave
Of the raptures of glebe and grove,
And of love,

And of God
That loveth all,
And careth for the sparrow's fall.
But have we aught of sympathy save
For the idle birds ?
This couple had, too, their pairing time,
Idyllic days in passion's prime,
And every stick
Of the derelict
'Twas love that sought it,
'Twas love that bought it.
Their love was a bit of nature, too,
Just as pleasant, just as true,
As the love of the birds ;
But love is dead,
And the pair have fled
In shame and pain.
Eden is closed,
And interposed
Is the flaming sword of "Never again."
Yet, I pray you, pause,
O auctioneer,
In your jibe and jeer ;
Pause, for the love that was,
On reflection, brings
To these worthless things
A value high
That gold or silver cannot buy.

'Tis wicked we know
To harry the nests
Of the pretty birds
In the happy and pleasant pairing time,
'Tis a brutal crime—
Do we not teach our children so,
Till their little hearts
Are all afire with a generous glow?
But our best and sympathetic chords
Are for the bird;
We cannot afford
To love the human.
And this man and woman,
Whose crime was debt,
What can they either expect or get?
Harry them out of home and hearth,
Send them to wander over earth,
Let their rooftree be
That vast serenity—
God's own blue sky—
The gorgeous canopy,
Whether it be in darkness shrouded,
Sombre and dull and dim beclouded,
Or afire with crimson blazonry,
Studded with sun and moon and star.
O unfortunates,
Blame not the fates,
If these may still thy home-lights be.
O wanderers, where'er you are,

These are the commonwealth, and these
From thee no grasping hand can seize ;
These are beyond thy clutch and sneer,
O joking, jibing auctioneer.

Oh ! the birds,
The happy birds,
Do they ever get
Into trouble and into debt ?
Do they fall in arrears
For nuts and corn ?
Have they boding fears
Of shame and scorn ?
It may be so.
And the frost and snow,
Are they God's liveried messengers
To make distraint
For the genial airs
And the warmth upon the birds bespent ?
For advances made
In the leafy shade ?
For the summer rent
And the summer food ?
In Nature, does the law hold good
An eye for an eye
And a tooth for a tooth ?
Is it a truth
That payment is part of Nature's plan—
A universal necessity ?

Does something for something,
And naught for naught,
Hold true alike for erring man
And for the lords of the wandering wing?
Then, auctioneer,
With thy jibe and sneer,
Thou art part of heaven's economy,
And heaven, well-pleased, may be satisfied
When thy work is done,
When thy fee is won,
When the rent is paid.



Rest in Peace.

LET us pour no drop of malice
In grief's consecrated chalice ;
As we hope for rest or heaven,
Let no Pharisaic leaven
Find within us root or lodgment
As we call the dead to judgment,
Where he lies upon the cold sward,
With his dull eyes looking heavenward—
Far away ;
While the murky clouds are weeping,
And a dull, sad dusk is creeping
O'er the day.

Let the truth be plainly stated—
Let the dead be justly rated ;
Let us say not he was saintly—
Ah ! the good but glimmers faintly
In us all.
Be thou, then, his stern recorder,
O, thou man of moral order,
Wholly free from Satan's durance—
Those assured with thy assurance
Never fall ;
But I dare not point the finger
For the sins that in me linger.

When I in the murky weather
Stand in spirit by him, lying

* In Memoriam, PETER GILRUTH, accidentally shot by his employer.

On the cold earth, dead or dying,
There are three that come together,
He and I and yet another,
Who might be my very brother ;
Yet he hath no imperfection,
Trace of sin, or sin's correction.
Starts he from the misty silence,
Parts us twain with gentle violence ;
With his fair hands, pure and clean,
O'er him throws a robe of whiteness,
Touches me with touch of lightness ;
And his bright and unmarred visage
Is itself to me a message ;
And I note as he approaches,
In his eyes the mute reproaches.
Ah ! I know he cannot be there
Whom I very plainly see there.
Ah ! he real is—yet unreal ;
Is a shadow, an ideal ;
For the form that interposes
Where I stand and he reposes
Is the man I might have been.

Place within the heavenly balance
Both our gifts and graces, talents,
Who of us has most received ?
Who of us has most achieved ?
Shadow, Shadow, thou hast shamed me !
Who am I that would have blamed thee,

My poor, erring, lifeless brother?
 Brother? yes, in truth, no other—
 Hadst thou been the pure, untainted,
 Then my heart might well have fainted—
 Turned from thee in nameless terror;
 But by reason of the error,
 By the failings out of sin bred,
 Thou hast proved we two are kindred.
 Let him who hath prayed and fasted
 Take a stone and at thee cast it;
 Cry aloud thy faults and spare not;
 As for me I stand and dare not—
 Stand in spirit only sighing—
 Stand in spirit by thee lying
 On the sod—
 For the Shadow's admonition
 Leaveth me in meek contrition,
 For myself forgiveness pleading—
 Leaving thee with all thy needing
 Unto God.

Dear the dead whose lives, well ordered
 Unto sin have never bordered;
 And their last clasp with us lingers,
 Like a touch from angel fingers;
 Let their groaning biers be laden
 With the fairest flowers of Eden;
 Let the crowds who, mourning, follow
 Speak in praise, sincere or hollow;

Give them requiems—give, and grudge not ;
But unto their tomb I trudge not—
Yon pale slumberer, hot with kisses,
One lone mourner never misses—
Dark Golgotha rather choose I,
When the sad procession goes by,
With the bier
Of one who in life had stumbled,
So that I, in spirit humbled,
Think of that which we attained not,
And for things that both have gained not
Drop a tear.

Who shall find in his behaviour
For himself sufficient saviour?
Into port come, torn and shattered,
Ships dismasted, storm-battered ;
Others come with spicy odours,
Stately sailing, flying colours.
Those with raging seas have striven ;
From their course have oft been driven
On their lees.
These their course have bravely held on ;
But, perchance, they only sailed on
Summer seas.

He has known it, O, my brother ;
He has seen it, if no other ;
He has marked the strong contention

Nature warring with convention ;
He has watched the inward striving
After purer, higher living ;
And He took thee while the savour
Of a lasting brave endeavour,
Like a fragrance, hung around thee ;
When thy step was firmer, lighter ;
When thine eye was burning brighter
With an impulse born of duty ;
And will not His love surround thee
With a grandeur, with a beauty
Here unknown ?
Pity Infinite that laves us
In a pure baptismal river,
Pity Infinite that saves us
Is a free and generous giver—
Loves us though we sordid clay be,
Sees in us the things that may be,
Sees our good in our abasement,
Sees us men in our defacement,
Sees beneath the coarse and real,
Though in ruins an ideal.
Thou whose dead eyes look to Heaven,
Yea, an answer shall be given ;
Yea, thy last and brave endeavour
Shall as righteousness find favour,
When the Almighty Artist working
Shall reveal the statue lurking
In the stone.

The Farm.

(After Walt Whitman.)

THEY were man and wife—a country pair :

The husband tall, strong limbed, broad shouldered ;
The wife plump, good looking, black eyed, rosy cheeked ;
He a ploughman working on the farm ;
She staying at home, nursing the children, rearing poultry,
 attending the pig ;
Both sober, industrious, and thrifty ;
Both unhappy and discontented.

They were ambitious ;

Where is he or she that is not ambitious ?

He was tired of the drudgery of the farm,

Tired of the early uprising and of late down-lying,

Tired of attending the markets, of being looked at and
 bought like a bullock ;

She, in all things compliant and wifely, was tired because he
 was tired.

His desire was to be a farmer,

Her desire was to be a farmer's wife.

The farm—O they had pictured it often—

The farmhouse, whitewashed, standing on an eminence,
 surveying the farm,

They had seen such an one often.

Honeysuckle climbing up on the porch,
Roses clustering thick on the walls,
Round it lilac trees, the mountain ashes with their red
berries, and the great geans with their white flourish ;
The cornyard, with the corn and hay high piled ;
The horses, trudging round at the mill ;
The barn, with the chaff flying ;
The kine returning at noon and evening with distended
udders,
The white jets rushing and foaming in the clear-polished
pails ;
The big mastiff, faithful, alert, active ;
The turkey, the awkward geese, the strutting chanticleer with
his harem—
Ah, yes ! they had seen such an one often.

Year by year they hoarded their earnings,
But the pile grew slowly, slowly ;
The farm looked far away in the distance—
It was fair, but fair as a dream or a delusive mirage.
How did it all come about ?
A friend suggested it one day when he was sadly com-
plaining :—
They should take an inn in the town—
That was the sure road to success,
That was the sure way to make money,
That was the road to the farm.
An inn ? They shrank from the thought of it.
To stand at a bar ;

To sell to tipplers and toppers ;
To feel daily the damp smell of the sawdust ;
To breathe the stale, nauseous fumes of tobacco ;
To make money from wretchedness.
An inn ? No longer to work in the sunshine under the open
sky.

And yet, what matter'd it ?
If the road was miry and the avenue dubious and low,
It led to the broad, green acres ;
It was a short cut—a by-path—
It led to the farm—the farm.

In the bar, preparing for trade,
Busy the joiners and decorators ;
Bustle, hurry, activity, glare and glitter, screeching of saws
and daubing of paint,
Great barrels set up, painted and gilded with gold leaf,
Clear cut crystal chandeliers, red and green glasses, and
polished pewter pots plentifully scattered about.
The bar finished at last,
He standing behind the bar awkward and loutish,
She, smiling, assisting, noways put about, adapting herself to
the circumstances, looking as if she had been in the
business all her days.

In the country great preparations, too ;
Ah ! how they used to watch for the spring.
Do you think of it, wife ?
Do you remember it, husband ?

Over the bar they hung a bird's cage, with a lark in it and a
piece of green turf.

The bird broke into song; his songs were songs of remembrance :
he saw it all too—

Primroses springing in the woods and pale anemones,

Hedges bursting into foliage,

Trees sending forth delicate leaves, falling like spray all
around them,

Children stringing again the daisies and buttercups,

Yellow blossom on the broom and the whin,

Nature, hurrying on to the front her troops and underground
forces,

The old mandate set forth, "Let there be life and light,"

Creation again.

Birds singing everywhere.

New birds in a new world,

Twitter, chirrup, flutter, never off the wing,

Their nesting a new thing,

Their songs new, and their mates superb and unequalled ;

New bliss, new domesticity ;

Chaos threatening them if the nest be unfinished and the
hatching be not over in time.

Twitter, chirrup, flutter, hurry and bustle,

Old birds going about the old work, soberly, sagaciously, not
just so active,

Singing seldomer they ; deeper, fuller songs, with a touch of
sorrow in them :

They have memories,

They know there may be troubles,
They remember of such things as ravished nests.

In the fields great preparations too ;
The ploughman driving his team,
The share driven deep in, the glad earth rising and rushing
 before it ;
Solemn crows stalking in attendance.
The earth waiting receptive,
The sower scattering his seed,
The big-bellied clouds brooding over, participating, ready to
 drop in approval.

The farm comes nearer :
They almost smell the flourish of lilac and gean trees ;
The coins drop, drop, dropping into the till—
Every penny a prisoner, not one of them needlessly spent—
The purchase fee of the farm has to be saved and secured.
Something different this from the old life with the miserable
 dole at the end of the twelvemonth,
A different life and a merrier—
The taps always flowing ;
The great barrels filled, emptied, refilled, and emptied again ;
Lorries constantly at the door ;
The amber ale, the generous stout, the clear spirits, and the
 blood-red rum pumped out in the street into great
 measures ;
Barrel-shaped draymen, jolly and rubicund, pumping, sweating,
 drinking, joking.

A different life and a sadder :

One thing brings sorrow—

The daily procession of wretchedness, misery, rags ;

Hags withered, bleared-eyed, forbidding, drowning remembrance of youth, innocence, purity ;

Broken down men furtively slinking out and in ;

Broken-nosed bullies and swaggerers, brutal, audacious ;

Haggard harassed debtors dodging their debts in forgetfulness ;

Round-faced jovial fellows bending themselves nearly double, laughing hilariously, slapping one another, telling sly smutty jokes, winking to waitress ;

The young lad tipping his glass with the knowing air of his elders ;

The young woman simpering, sniggering, amazed at his (the youth's) manliness ;

Sad sight these, but just to be seen for a little ;

Shortly they would all be forgotten in the open air and the sunshine ;

Out of sight out of mind.

The farm comes nearer and nearer.

The man less niggardly now, inclined to spend and be social, Midsummer with him.

In the country, midsummer.

How the throat of the lark throbs as he thinks of it—

Clover in the fields up to the knees of the children ;

The making of hay ;

The corn, tall, rich, green, succulent ;

Kine in the shade loitering, whisking the flies with their tails ;

The great blades on the trees, open, expanded, taking all they
can get of the sunshine ;
Fruit in the orchards, just needing the mellowing touch of
the autumn ;
Strawberries ripe ;
Children gathering rasps in the wood ;
Citizens, half-roasted, hurrying out of town ;
In the intense heat, the cool, pleasant, refreshing Spring, and
the rippling noise of the wasted streamlets.

Still nearer and nearer the farm.

The man visiting farms, just on the eve of purchasing ;
Friend needs a loan, just a little timely assistance—
Why be a niggard, a miser ?
The money is given ; friend fails and decamps ; the money is
lost.

Alas for the farm ! it fades away further than ever.

What matter ? To it again.

Just a little more toiling and waiting ;
Just a little while longer of wretched processions.
The man deteriorates a little, is growing more careless and
social, and becomes better liked.
Times change for the bad.
The processions grow less ;
The lorries are seldomer seen at the door ;
The flow of the ale, the stout, the spirits, and red rum is
sluggish ;
A new bar down the way started with newer and fresher
attractions.

Slowly the money comes in.

The inn is an incubus now—they hate it ;

They would leave it, but cannot ; he could not work now as
a ploughman :

The new slavery is worse than the old.

Autumn.

The lark seldomer singing ;

They scarcely speak of the country ;

There are great black spots on the leaves—the roads are strewn
with them ;

The great woods are afire—they glow like the bush of Moses ;

The nights are long, and the shadows are long through the
day ;

The birds have done with their loves, they are gathering in
from the woods and clustering round the cornyards ;

The robin is growing audacious ; he knows the time for hard
fare is approaching ;

The children are gathering the sloes and the brambles ;

The crofters are piling their peats at the back of their cots ;

It is a time for gathering and storing—

Woe to them that have nothing to gather.

The man, now sodden and dazed, has always the same senile
smile—

Always in dreamland, in tippie ;

The tippling brings back the farm.

Sometimes he brightens up with a friend, and speaks of
ploughs and of horses ;

Wife, smiling yet, but subdued,
Watching him, never letting him out of her sight, fearful, but
of what she knows not.

The inn—she curses it now in her heart,
Yet she takes on his duties, and watches and manages
everything,

While he, unthinking, indifferent.

Wife, thinking no more of the farm—thinking only of him.
Thinking of him she has lost, the man, the choice of her
youth.

No, that cannot be him, the strong and the shapely—
That man with the shuffling gait, the raised shoulders, head
drooping, look stupid and stolid.

Can this be the youth whose voice was to her as the falling
of water in summer, the sound of whose coming made
her cheeks flush and her bosom quicker pulsate?

She remembered yet of the walks in the twilight, of the
whisperings low, of the pressing of hands, of the loitering
in nightly farewells ;

She remembered of him who had sung of her, loved her, wooed
her, toiled for their little home, and married her.

For these things the sot was sacred ; he was transformed
before her :

Memory hung round him a golden aureole.
Still she loved on.

A day comes, half the shutters are on,
The house blinds are drawn down.
Yet another day comes ;

The mourners gather with long crape and white weepers ;
Through the streets goes the hearse, with a dismal procession
of coaches.

The cemetery gates are flung open,
A grave is waiting and ready ;
The coffin is lowered, and the grass thrown in to smother the
sound of the shovelled-in earth ;
The hats are off for a moment,
And this is the end of it—
A piece of patched turf on the green sward.
Heaven help us all !
He has reached his farm at last.

Snow on the ground ;
The roses are gone and the honeysuckle ;
The lilac trees are lifeless, so are the ashes and gean trees ;
The farmhouse is naked and desolate, fronting the full force
of the blast.
The streams are sealed with the frost,
The birds are silent,
The sky is forbidding and sombre,
The wind moans and tosses about the withered leaves.

Lately looking at his grave ;
Over it a laburnum was hanging its golden tresses ;
Over it a bird was singing in joy and gladness—
Was he inspired ;
Was it a song of pardon, redemption, purification ?

Earth had forgiven him. Over him growing the same green,
grass that grew over all.

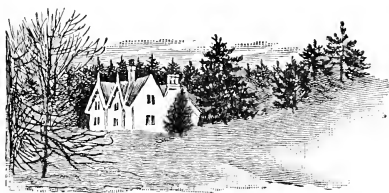
What of Heaven ?

O, thou Recording Angel, who recordest amidst pitying tears
our sin and shortcomings,

When thou recordest his sin, place against it on the opposite
page his failure, the lost ideal—the farm.

Square off his fall with that.

Ah, how the gold, the devil purchases our souls with, turns
into leaves, withered, dry, and seared !



The Memory of Burns.

LINES READ AT THE ALYTH BURNS CLUB ANNIVERSARY CONCERT,

JAN. 25, 1890.

AGAIN we hail his natal day,
The Sovereign Minstrel, Patriot Bard,
And gather here to greet his sway
With tokens of renewed regard.

With kinsmen meeting everywhere
To own his undiminished power,
We, too, would in their fervour share,
And spend a genial social hour.

Shall we but give with ecstasy
The homage of some fulsome words?
And shall his songs and carols be
The transient rapture of the birds—

Brief interludes in lives of care,
Borne onward by the passing wind,
To melt into the viewless air,
And leave no influence behind?

Nay, let them be as flashing swords
By heroes from their scabbards drawn,
Incisive, stirring, urging words—
Words that to action's day are dawn.

So by his dauntless spirit taught,
We may his independence reach,
And dare to give to free-born thought
Brave utterance in manly speech ;

Nor stand appalled with craven lips,
When Tyranny, in modern guise,
Would Freedom's broadening sun eclipse
By the bold blackness of her lies.

Have we, the men of Strathmore, lacked
His courage in these days of change ?
We by the burly Grampians backed
And shielded by the Sidlaw range ;

We who may trace the Isla's course,
From trickling life in infant dream,
To where she leaps with Celtic force
Through gorges to her tranquil stream ;

Where sluggish Dean, with slow disdain,
Abets her in her lingering pride,
Till rapid Ericht joins the twain,
To urge the Tay's reluctant bride.

Shall we love Scotland less than he,
We who survey her fairest plain ?
Shall our aspiring mountains be
Nature's satire on skulking men ?

Go, seek thy country's fairest scenes,
And find them to thy footsteps barred,
Her streams, her dales, her peaks, ravines,
The stranger's hireling minions guard.

Go, mark in every Highland glen
The ruined homesteads of her sons,
That race of stalwart, sturdy men
Exiled by pleasure's myrmidons.

Think, but that Scotland heard him sing
A wild despairing farewell note,
And caught her songster on the wing—
His, too, had been the outcast's lot.

Then show thy reverence for the bard,
By reverence for his country's cause,
And aid the sage his land to guard
From pressure of unequal laws ;

Till to the stall and market place,
The swarming hucksters backward thrown,
Shall cease to traffic in her grace,
And Scotland's beauty be her own ;

Till Scotland's peasantry restored—
His kindred ploughers of the soil
Shall find again on Scottish sward
A recompense for honest toil.

Be ours his love of lowly worth,
Ours his contempt of empty pride
Of lords that lean upon their birth,
The sustenance of deeds denied.

And so may every Scotchman strive,
In life that low endeavour spurns,
To guard thy fame and keep alive
Immortally thy memory, Burns.



The Memory of Burns.

LINES READ AT THE ALYTH BURNS CONCERT, JAN. 26, 1891.

EVERY morn we find fresh glory
In the blushing of the dawn,
Every evening a new splendour
In the setting of the sun.

Ever youthful mother, Nature,
Shows no wrinkles on her face,
For she has perpetual vigour,
And an everlasting grace.

When she chose her Scottish minstrel
From among the common throng,
She imbued him with her spirit
Wherewithal to make his song ;

So to bathe it in the beauty
Of her evanescent hues,
And preserve it in the crystal
Morning freshness of her dews.

Thus it is each new occasion
Brings new tributes to his name,
And the rolling years add lustre
To the brightness of his fame.

Yet no idle hero-worship
Is the mood which us impels ;
For his the higher influence is
Which attracting, yet repels ;

For his power the genial force is
Of the all-pervading sun,
Which controls us to our orbit,
While he shines within his own.

As strong wings, his thoughts that bear us
To a height unknown before,
Where we may outstretch our pinions,
And ourselves may learn to soar ;

For the minstrel's songs are foolish,
And his verses tinkling chimes,
If a message for the ages
Be not sounded through his rhymes ;

If they lull you down to dreaming
Of a glory passed away,
If they urge you not to action
In God's drama of to-day.

Beauty—the elusive phantom—
Film of sunshine and of air—
If his spirit be upon you
It is with you everywhere.

Lo ! the glory and the splendour
Which he dwells in evermore ;
It is flashing on your windows,
It is flushing on your door ;

And it falls on all around you,
Be they lowly, be they mean,
Till you see in God's great world
Nothing common or unclean.

Let your spirit catch contagion
From the minstrel's rhapsodies,
And be widened to the measure
Of his boundless sympathies.

Do not speak with maudlin feeling
Of the coming brotherhood,
While you stand before your fellows
In unhelpful attitude.

Lend your sympathy to Esau,
When he barter for his bread
With the over-reaching Jacob
In the avenues of trade.

Do not flaunt the written contract *
To exhausted flesh and blood,

* Reference to Strike of Railway Servants.

While you tear in shreds the older,
Better law of rectitude.

Let his songs be bugles calling
Till you fall in line, and be,
'Midst the marshalled hosts of freedom,
Waging war with tyranny ;

Till the minstrel in you breathing
Generous ardour, firmer will,
Shall again in new endeavour
Be with us and living still.



Donald Duff.*

[T'S hey ! for the land o' sneesin' an' snuff,
An' ho ! for the Highlanders grimy an' gruff,
An' hey ! for the lad whase surname is Duff—
It's, sirs, what think ye o' Donald ?

O fair shines the sun in the north on his ha',
It's mony braid acres his ain he can ca' ;
O' the wealth in the bank his share isna sma'—
A weel-lined purse has Donald.

At braw Highland Jennies he crookit his mooth,
An' sair was the sabbin' an' sighin', in truth,
When he mountit his naggie, an' hied awa sooth—
A venturesome chieldie was Donald.

He cam' to the palace, an' thocht it nae sin
To knock at the yett wi' a thunderin' din ;
The servants cam' rinnin' an' ushered him in,
Confoonding yer impudence, Donald.

“ Come in,” said auld Ed'ard, “ come in by, my lad ;
We're sair bathered here by an ill-willy jaud.
My income's but sma', an' I want her to wad,
But deil a lad pleases her, Donald.

* The Verses may be looked upon as an Epithalamium on the Marriage of the
Duke of Fife.

“I’ve twa three mair dochters, they’ll grow in a wee,
If the rest o’ the limmers are fashus as she,
It’s what’s to become o’ their mither an’ me?”

“Bide a wee,” to the faither says Donald.

The faither was stormin’, the lassie was dour,
Her bonnie bit facey was sullen an’ sour,
An’ her jimpy bit fittie was daddin’ the stour,
Till her een chanced to licht on oor Donald.

She lookit him up, an’ she lookit him doon,
Frac croon to the kilt, frae calf to the shoon.
“By my saul, but this is a wise-looking loon,”
Says the lass to hersel’ o’ oor Donald.

The roses cam’ back to her twa bonnie cheeks,
The licht in her een was glozin’ like wicks,
She sighed for the laddie wantin’ the breeks—
Had they wiled her a man like oor Donald.

O’ wee German lairdies they’d roond a raw,
Starvin’ an’ scrimpit, mis-shapit an’ sma’;
Though ye’d bunched into ane the manikins a’
He wad been a halflin to Donald.

When Donald gaed forrit, the sweesh o’ his kilt
Blew them ower in the dubs, an’ their coaties were fil’t;
They stampit an’ swore, but tholed the insult
When they saw the bare shanks o’ oor Donald.

“ Will ye tak’ me noo, Ed’ard, your guidson to be ?”—
“ To the dour, crabbit limmer you’re welcome for me ;”
An’ it’s doon in the dust he has bendit the knee—
 Sic a weel-mannered chieldie was Donald.

The lassie was bashfu’, but ga’e him a smile,
Her dad wi’ a “ Hooch ” handit Donald his mull,
Cryin’, “ Some day ye’ll maybe ha’e dochters yersel’,
 An’ be muckle obleeged to a Donald.”

So hey ! for the land o’ mountain an’ rill,
An’ ho ! for the land o’ the stoup an’ the gill,
An’ hey ! for the lass, may she aye get her fill
 O’ love an’ contentment wi’ Donald.



The Deil and the Scotchmen.

AE day the Deil sat in his room,
Wi' face o' true satanic gloom,
Cudgellin' his brains for some new plan
To trap unwary, errin' man,
Conjecturin' wha wad win the odds,
The Hielant host or Dr Dods,
Or if the ranklin' heresy
Wad poison mony o' the Free—
Whan frae withoot there cam' a yell
That made him jump as high's himsel',
Followed by ane an' syne anither,
Till, nearly doited a'thegither,
As thro' and thro' his brains they flittit,
He held his heid for fear they'd split it.

Enraged, he struck a brazen gong
That by his ebon throne was hung,
Whan thro' the regions cavernous,
Low, menacin', an' tremulous,
Its deep an' growlin' thunder muttered,
As soonds by some fell monster uttered,
Roaming thro' prehistoric age
In dire an' horrid mammoth rage.

Quick at the soond an imp appears,
Vile lookin', jimpit for his years,
Increasin' cam' the fell uproar
Behin' him thro' the open door.
The imp himsel' looked fairly dazed,
His words the Deil half-heard amazed—
“It's nae use tryin' ony mair,
They've got the upper hand, I fear,
Sae if you want the noise to quell
I'm thinkin' ye maun come yersel'.”

“Come, mind your manners as you chatter ;
What is the meanin' o' the clatter ?”
Said Satan as he heard a rattle
As if o' knives an' plates in battle ;
“You careless imps your wark are jinkin',
An' lave me little time for thinkin'.
Explain at aince the perturbation,
Or seek anither situation.”

“'Deed, sir, it's juist thae Scots again—
Thae red-haired, wild, ramshackle men—
They've been to me an awfu' fash,
A sair torment wi' gab an' gash.
What wi' their singin' an' their feastin'
I'm sure their tongues are never restin' ;
Aye some excuse to fill their stammack
Wi' aitcakes an' the skimmed milk kebbuck ;
An' when they ask for creature wants,

The hypocrites, it's for the saunts—
Sometimes St John's feast, neist St Andrew's ;
Whiles brithers, whiles wi' naked skein-dhus
Rushin' to grip anither's thrapple—
'Deed, sir, they're mair than I can grapple."

"Confoond them," said his fallen grace,
While deeper gloom cam' o'er his face ;
"A contramacious set o' deevils,
The warst o' a' my mony evils ;
Sin' e'er they cam' aboot the place
I've never kent a mament's peace.
What means their present devilry ?"
"It's Burns's anniversary,
They've twenty sangs to sing an' mair
Afore oor burdened ears they'll spare.
I tried to shorten the programme,
But every sang intilt they cram,
Frae 'Rantin' Rob' till 'Auld Lang Syne,'
Will finish up their bletherin' din.
What wi' their thumpin' an' their hoochin',
The very roof will soon be shook in.
Guid save us, there it is again"—
An' here he stapped his ears in pain,
As wi' a waesome soond an' dreech
They garred an eldricht pibroch screech.

Here Satan's broo's in wrinkles thrawn,
An's lips in wrath a while are chawn ;

Should he the sorry wretches slau'ter,
Or limit them to bread an' water ?
" Ah," sudden cried he, " I've a plan,
But no a word to sinfu' man"—
Here to the imp some words he uttered,
Wha soon wi' lauchter shook an' spluttered.

Awa' they trod, whaur ilka Scot
The misery o' the place forgot,
Wi' roars o' lauchter fairly squeeled,
Or, linked thegither, jump an' reeled,
Till Satan, haudin' up his hand,
Implored peace frae the boisterous band ;
Then smoothin' aff his face the guile,
He spak' thus wi' a gruesome smile—
" Forgi'e, brave Scots, my veesit here ;
It's nae less than a duty clear
For me to show my deep regard
For Scotland's gifted darling bard."

Here for a space the loud hurrahs
Ga'e to the Deil a minute's pause
To pump intae his een a tear—
" To me especially he's dear.
I wha by men am aft misrated
In rhyme he aft appreciated,
An' tho' no joinin' in my views,
Aye thocht I micht ha'e some excuse,
An' if he didna think me sainted,

Held I was whiter than they painted.
But, sirs, it's dry wark stannin' talkin',
An' faigs, I maun be shortly walkin' ;
But juist to show you I'm sincere,
An' wish to join your social cheer,
Without the door—mind this nae brag is—
I've placed the whisky an' the haggis,
Essential to this nicht o' freedom,
Whaur, free frae them that glower an' see dumb,
Your Scottish wut in wild effulgence
I may indulge wi' your indulgence."

Nae sooner said than on the floor
Ilk' Scot was rinnin' for the door.
The bendin' floor the pressure feels
O' fleein' an' tremendous heels ;
A' that was seen o' speedin' rogues
The shinin' tackets o' their brogues.
Quick after them the Deevil ran,
An' scarce had cleared the hinmost man,
Whan to the door he closed wi' bang,
That a the startled echoes rang,
Fast seized the key an' turned the lock,
While sweaty humours o'er him broke,
An' cried, wi' face as white's a cloot,
"Thank Heaven, at last the Scotch are oot."

Johnnie's Wooing.

JOHN'S mither had deed, an' in the auld cot
He lived by himsel', content wi' his lot ;
Wi' delvin' his yaird an' rearin' a pig,
And keepin' the hoosie clean, canty, an' trig—
He had plenty o' ploiter, had Johnnie.

But the neighbours objectin', as some neighbours can,
To sic solid comforts possessed by a man,
Aye bizzed oot an' in his fairin' to see,
Whiles steerin' his parritch, whiles makin' his tea,
An' sair wi' their fash bathered Johnnie.

Quo' John to himsel', "This friendship I'll brak',"
As he bocht him a lock an' put on a chack ;
But they rakit their drawers an' fell in wi' keys,
And drapp'd oot an' in as before at their ease,
Sayin', "Dinna mind risin' noo, Johnnie."

The mithers wi' dochters they wished aff their hands,
Had trained them like pointers to wait his commands ;
An' the limmers themsel's, though they lookit sae shy,
When Johnnie was passin', ga'e mony a sigh.

"But thae's for my hoose," snichered Johnnie.

“Ye fause-faced deceivers, ye’ll plague me nae mair,”
Quo’ John on a day they’d tormentit him sair ;
“As they dae wi’ the rats I’ll dae wi’ thae weemin,
To scatter the vermin I’ll tak’ in a tame ane ;
I’ll marry to spite them,” quo’ Johnnie.

“But nane o’ thae glaiket an’ flichtersome jades,
Thae bundles o’ claes, wi’ nocht in their heids ;
Some decent, douce body, aboot my ain age,
And naeways camsteery, but settled an’ sage,
To match my bit hoosie,” quo’ Johnnie.

He mustered in thocht a’ the maids o’ his youth
(A gey lad whan younger was Johnnie, in truth),
An’ first in the line cam’ Kirsty M’Bain,
A fat, cowntious cook, wi’ gear o’ her ain—
“It’ll come michty handy,” quo’ Johnnie.

He plucked up a pen, shot his tongue thro’ his face,
An’ wrote a plain letter explainin’ his case,
Addin’ this for P.S., “There’s nae time to be lost—
A reply will obleege by return o’ the post,
In hopes to be yours truly, Johnnie.”

Neist day it passed by, an’ e’enin’ cam’ on,
But nae letter cam’ to the door o’ oor John.
“Civility’s cheap—confoond her,” quo’ he,
“Her na say or nae say ’ill no bather me—
To the neist in succession,” quo’ Johnnie.

He inditit anither precisely the same,
For nocht did he alter, exceptin' the name ;
An' this time the lass was Janet M'Lean,
Wha he mindit far back was a cheery young quean—
 " An' lauchter is lightsome," quo' Johnnie.

But a day had gane by, whan there cam' a loud rap,
That rattled the hoose an' roused John frae a nap ;
Whan he opened the door, 'twas Postie he saw,
Wha handit him in no ae letter, but twa.
 " Mighty confusin'," quo' Johnnie.

He tore open the ane, but canny the 'ither,
Conjointly their contents made pair Johnnie swither ;
Ye can judge for yersel's o' Johnnie's distress—
Baith leddies had answered, an' baith answered " Yes."
 " Gude keep us, I'm dune for," quo' Johnnie.

" I maun marry ane, but whae'er it is
The ither has clearly against me a case ;
I'll be mulcted at the law, they'll sell my bit hoose,
And lave me as bare as a starvin' kirk moose
 To cheer me in wedlock," quo' Johnnie.

Despairin' he sat an' scratched at his pow,
" They're gey kittle cattle the weemin, I trow ;
But, gang as it may, I'll mak' them a feast,
Whaur I'll be fattit calf for an e'enin' at least,
 For meat's mollifyin'," quo' Johnnie.

To his kind invitation the twa leddies cam',
John ushered them in wi' a solemn salaam ;
Baith spiered for his health, but looked at the ither,
An' thocht to themsel's, " They are sister an' brither,"
But nae explanation ga'e Johnnie.

He favoured the feast wi' a grace that was brief,
An' fed them on bannocks o' barley an' beef,
An' as a conclusion he handit aroon'
A wee thochty speerits to wash it a' doon.
" Noo for an explosion," quo' Johnnie.

He got up to his feet an' stammered his case,
Hoo baith him had answered an' baith answered " Yes ;"
" For ane ower the ither I've nae love at a',
I wad marry ye baith, but for fear o' the law,
Sae settle't atween ye," quo' Johnnie.

But Kirsty arose—a red mune her face—
Picked up her braw duds, an' sailed frae the place ;
Said never a word, but flang on the floor
The letter frae John, as she banged to the door.
" Gude save's, what a tartar !" quo' Johnnie.

But Janet lay back an' leuch like to burst—
The trouble was thro' wi' the fleecin' o' Kirst ;
An' aft as a warning the story he tells,
" It's best to let fashes juist settle themsel's,
As they did when I marriet," quo' Johnnie.

In the Heart of the Valley.

[N the heart of the Valley ;
In the quaint and quiet town,
Where of old time the Abbey
Stood in its stately proportions,
Shedding abroad like a beacon
The light of our holy religion
To far off lands and adjacent,
Settled in heathenish darkness—
There they have laid her with mourning,
To rest in the exceeding stillness.

Sacred and hallowed the ground is,
Its dust is the dead generations.
There in their graves are commingled
Many a knight and a holy man,
Many a maid and a matron ;
Yet none of them all was gentler,
Purer, better, worthier of love,
Than thou, my friend and my sister.

Silent I stand 'mid the graves
By the ruin covered with ivy,
And I think of the mother of all,
Ever in travail and trouble—

Good mother earth—that has taken
Back to her bosom her children ;
Yea, and their handiwork also.
The pious builders are gone,
Gone is the Abbey of old ;
And yet the Shekinah o'ershadows :
I stand in the Temple of God—
A vaster Cathedral and grander,
Whose walls are the hills everlasting,
Whose roof is the o'er-arching sky,
Whose floor is the plain of the valley ;
Filled with His Infinite Presence,
Before whom are ever the quick
And the dead at rest 'neath the altar.
Each individual apart,
No one lost or impersonal,
No one unknown or forgotten,
Of those who are living to praise Him,
Nor of those who are waiting a little
Till the perfect service begins,
Till the opening discords have ceased,
Till the fuller harmony breaks
On the depth of their slumbers.

Why should I single her out
As she lies with her silent companions ?
Each had their lovers and friends.
Ah ! so it is, I have courage
To speak of her here, O my brother ;

My sorrow is something to thee ;
My grief is thine, or it may be.
She I would tenderly speak of
Was no impossible woman.
Such an one may linger beside thee
At home in the shadow of love ;
Like a dove in its dove-cote,
With snowy plumage unspotted,
Meek-eyed, gentle, steadfast, and true ;
To whom thy love is as life,
To whom the lack of it—death.
And thou unwittingly baskest
In the sunshine made by her presence,
Breathing the sweet atmosphere
Made by her love and her goodness,
And all unthankfully takest
The gift the good God has given thee.
Ah, brother, listen ; I charge you
By the love of her resting in death,
Meet love with love, give affection,
Measure for measure, heaping over ;
Else shall anguish lay hold of thee,
Bitterest sadness of soul
When she, fading away from thy presence,
Becomes transfigured before thee,
And thou standest and markest, awe-stricken,
The unfolding of white wings,
And knowest that all unawares
An angel has entertained thee.

Clear is the night, in the sky
Are hung like pendants the stars,
And they move in silent procession
To a music measured and slow,
Unheard by ears that are mortal ;
From the north to the zenith
The pale lights are streaming and flashing ;
Marvellous and great are Thy works
O Maker of earth and of Heaven,
But their grandeur is sterile,
No warmth there is in their splendour ;
The chamber is lit with a light
That is fierce, and searching, intense ;
But the guest is away, and I stand
As one who hath tarried the last
At the banquet, lonely and chilled,
Appalled in the empty apartment.
Where art thou, O sister beloved ?
Doth thy soul inhabit some bright sphere ?
I gaze from the depths of my eyes
Outward, and upward, and onward ;
But the gates are nowhere ajar,
And only I see the thin mists
Forming, floating, dispersing, dissolving.
My ears are a-pained with the straining,
But they hear not, like a long sigh,
The burden of wings in the air,
Nor the gentle coming and soft fall
Of feet that are shod as with silence.

Beyond the veil and behind it
Is thine, an unutterable longing,
Art thou near me, though I may feel not
The touch of impalpable fingers ?

Pleasant was youth when we two
In innocence wandered together,
Hand in hand went we, with our feet
On the green, soft sward of a broad path ;
Over the walls by the wayside
Hung the apples of gold and of silver—
The fruit of the orchards of Eden ;
We two by ourselves in the sunshine,
With never a thought of the future :
But the heavens darkened above us,
The road grew stony and hard,
The walls came closer together,
The crowd increased, and the clamour,
Then came the surge of events,
And we were severed for ever.
Sometimes our eyes met, and our hands
Touched in the tumult and crowding,
But never a word was spoken,
I breathed not—How fare you, my sister ?
Nor thou—How fare you, my brother ?

Round me on the roadway of life
Gathered new friends and new faces.
O comrades, nearest and dearest,

O friend in storm and disaster,
Faithful, true, and leal-hearted,
Bear with my sorrow for her,
Dream not I love you the less
Because of my mourning for her ;
My sorrow is not all for her,
Nor yet for myself, but for you,
And for all that are human.
Because of the ideals that beckon
And fade from us into the dim land,
Henceforth, thou art dearer, O friend ;
More sacred I to myself.
I fain would be somewhat akin
To the shadow she dreamt of.

Emanations, are you or am I
Partial, evanescent, Divine ?
Are we atoms of almighty force—
But vapours born to bedew earth,
To leave behind but an impulse ?
Is the thought brought forth of our grossness—
The thought of a home in a bright land,
Above the din and contention,
The heat, the dust, and the turmoil—
Where the love of women is not,
Nor of men—where there only remaineth
The perfect spirit of comrades ?
Nay : She is there with a pained brow,
Gazing, gazing over the battlements.

Light at Last.

IN MEMORIAM—CARDINAL NEWMAN.

OUT of the dark—out of the encircling gloom
Of earth and night,
Thou, wearied pilgrim, hast at length reached home
And kindly light.

And, many be, although they may not kneel
At thy loved shrine,
Who yearn and grope through life to reach and feel
A faith like thine,

When sobering down from youth's impetuous mood
On pathway rough
And dubious moors, they too have understood—
One step enough.

The kindly stars that nightly beam on earth
Bespeak the sun,
To our horizon lost, to issue forth,
And night is gone ;

So thy high faith, in spirit lifting thee
To holiest height,
A heaven-caught lustre sheds where there may be
No kindly light.

Source of all light ! dost thou with anger mark
Thy pilgrim band
When timid Fearing, in the gloom and dark,
Grasps Great Heart's hand ?

In Memoriam—William Reid, Journalist.

WANDERING up and down the city, pacing by the river's
side,
'Neath a sky of ashen sadness, gazing on the sombre tide.

Loud the Christmas bells are ringing, but my thoughts are
out of tune,
Thinking of the mournful cortège in the coming afternoon—

Thinking of the train that hastens burdened with the lifeless
friend,
Hurried, bustled in his lifetime ; hurried, bustled to the end.

Will the world alter greatly with the knowledge of his views?
Will his death be just an item blotted out by next day's news?

Will his memory last the nine days? Will our friend be
mourned and missed?
Can the press permit an Ego to a vanished journalist?

See, the great machine he tended, live, pulsating, potent press,
Never ceases its vibrations, never gives a throb the less.

Comrade ! fill his place up sadly, face a moment blanching
white.

Watch for him the mess of pottage for the public appetite.

Gossip from the north and south lands, gossip from the east
and west,
Still come pouring the ingredients, though our friend is laid
at rest—

For our ears are discontented if the cackle of the globe
Breaks not in upon our slumbers ere we don the morning robe.

And we dream not of their labours, ready faithful servitors,
Noting down the murmurous babble of this noisy world of
ours—

Captured for us in the flying, and we reck not of the strain
Of the wearied nerves in tension, of the pressure on the brain.

O, inventors, cease your labours ; each invention faster drives
Men already fastly driven through the scramble of their lives ;

Bringing forth the latent forces from the unknown “First of
All,”

You are making more of matter, but mankind becometh
small.

Juggernautian Car of Progress—ah, the multitude conceals—
With its plaudits drowns the groaning of the victims of your
wheels.

Slaves idolatrous we moderns to the God we worship—Speed,
Though we garnish tombs of martyrs with the garish wreaths
of meed.

Ah, our comrade, lost and vanquished, not less surely wert
thou slain,

Though the slayer slew thee slowly through the body and the
brain !

With thy spirit, "Speed," upon us, like a mighty, rushing
wind,

Little time have we for fervour in affection for a friend.

O sad train, still rushing onward, quickly bring thy burden
here ;

We may linger but a moment with our tribute at his bier—

Tribute not of maudlin sorrow, tribute not of empty tears—

Token these unfit, unseemly for his uncomplaining years,

With the load of pain born bravely, faced with laughter,
merry jest—

Tribute of respectful manhood for the strong heart now at rest.

Only those who knew thee truly could thy friendship
comprehend—

Knew it flew not with the swallows, but was faithful to the
end.

Though the creed thou might'st not mumble, or a pious
shibboleth,

Yet thou lacked'st not inspiration from a high and holy
faith—

Faith in goodness in the human, and in acting as a man,
Not as sacerdotal Levite, but as true Samaritan.

Mother.

WHAT shall we say as she lies,
Her lips unstirred by a breath,
While the seal is set on her eyes
Of the peace and patience of Death?

For the simple old woman that read
Daily the Book of the Word,
And did, what of duty she did,
As it were in the sight of the Lord—

The simple old words are the best—
“Fallen asleep, and gone to her rest;”
Gently as leaves that are sere
Fall with the fall of the year.

Sad? Why should it be sad?
May we not rather be glad?
Glad, for the wayfaring past,
For the pilgrim landed at last,

On the rock of infinite trust,
Whereto all the faiths that there be,
Tremble and drift as they must
From the breast of a harbourless sea.

Shrunk and sallow and old,
And noway seeking for praise,
Why should the record be told
Of a round of monotonous days ?

Though once where youthfulness sat
The face was pleasant and good ;
But beauty and fairness are naught
To the crown of true motherhood—

Where every wrinkle that mars
The brow, or lurks at the eyes,
Is a scar where self in her wars
Was smitten by sacrifice.

Such mothers are plentiful? Yes,
And let us thank God it is so,
That so much of goodness there is
Lingering yet in this world below.

As essences, odorous, pure,
From Eden's holy estate,
Are the lives of those who endure,
And have learned to suffer and wait.

And thus while I linger to weave
A wreath for this mother of mine,
Do you not, O, brother, perceive
I weave, too, a chaplet for thine ;

And for all who in joy or in pain
 The path of maternity trod,
A wreath for the mothers of men,
 A wreath for the mother of God ;

For all who somewhere apart
 Where lowly obscurity hides,
Look on with trouble of heart,
 Till the noise of the tumult subsides,

Where men in the pell-mell and rush
 Of this Ishmaelite world of ours,
Angered and hotly a-flush,
 Are eagerly straining their powers.

For though we must be, they may wot,
 About the world's work, and beset
With peril of pitfall and plot,
 Their love remains with us yet.

And if we return with the calm
 Of heroes, or covered with shame,
For our wounds there is healing and balm
 In the love which is ever the same—

The love which lasts with the breath,
 For the brood which has flown from the nest,
And for those whom the ravisher Death
 Stole from the warmth of their breast.

God's peace for the trouble of mind,
God's rest for the wandering brain,
Fretfully looking to find
The children round her again.

Rest and freedom from sin,
And yet in Heaven will there be
Till the children are all gathered in,
The perfect felicity ?



In Memoriam—John Bright.

STILL Freedom moveth onward ; as she goes
She scattereth largess, giveth goodly gifts,
The cast-down raiseth, and from bending forms
Their weary load she lifts.

Her eyes for ever forward gaze ; a goal
She knoweth of, unseen by doubting men—
The Land of Promise, beautiful and fair
Beyond all human ken.

Blesséd are they her faithful ministers
Who follow with glad steps unswervingly,
Knowing she moves to good, though prejudice
May stand a mountain high

Across her path. Though ignorance may lay
A thousand obstacles to wound her feet,
Slowly she glides on, and they disappear
Or make obeisance meet.

Of all aid she accepteth, but is stayed
By none. She cannot rest. If man is weak,
She faints not with his weakness, but must still
For bolder conquests seek.

Great Tribune of the people, who hast fought
A valiant fight and now hast finished it,
Even thou a servant wert—a favourite child,
But not companion fit.

Who knows her secret councils ? Who would say
To her and all the good she contemplates,
“ Thus far, no further ? ” For them thy darkness dread —
Oblivion awaits.

Not even with thee might she make dalliance,
Forgetful of the welfare of the race ;
But yet o’er thee, for faithful service done,
She bends with pitying grace.

To her great heart, as mother might her child,
She presses thee, who with a long day’s march
Grew petulant and fretful with distrust
Under night’s starless arch.

She knew the orbs behind the threatening clouds
Moved on in placid, undimmed majesty ;
Her eyes foresaw, through chaos, terror, gloom,
The dawn thou could’st not see.

Thy weakness all forgot, she now will bear
Thy name and memory to ages down,
And leaves to thee the halo of renown,
Her fearless, valiant son.

And we, when Freedom’s self forgives her son,
Shall we in death our greater brother chide ?
Nay, let the memory of his faltering fade,
And gratefulness abide.

George Eliot.

HAST thou not found the
Heaven thou did'st long for?
The joy that remaineth?—
Living in impulse,
Leading us still.

Marching in sadness
Over the desert
We, children of men :
Land of the promise,
Where art thou hid ?

Shall we in weakness
Sink by the way, where
Bones of lost pilgrims
Bleaching in the bleakness
Mark out the path ?

Clouds hover o'er us,
Shining refulgent
To light up the road—
The lustre of lives,
Lives such as thine.

Burst there around us
Voices celestial,
Crying "Wayfarers,
Lands beyond Jordan
Wait for the bold."

Thy voice is heard 'mid
The choir celestial,
None clearer than thine,
Mortal immortal,
Lover of man.

Still thou remainest
A presence unseen,
Singing the songs which,
Lingering for ever,
Gladden the world.

This is the song—the
Song of the sages—
"Eternal life is
When self is smitten,
Slaughtered and slain

"Trouble and travail,
Sorrow, not gladness,
On as thou goest
Lie in the desert,
Pathway of pain.

“These do the gods love,
Patient in suffering,
Who, though in weakness,
Smile on their fellows—
Aid them along.

“Yea ! shall be given them,
They who shall conquer,
Deeper, diviner,
Holier, higher
Joy than of earth.

“New earth and new heavens
Wait for the new men ;
Doubtless a bourne is
For the stout-hearted,
Valiant of soul.

“Firmer and bolder then
Energies marshal—
Courage recover,
March to the music,
On to the end.

“Ignorant, fearless,
Caring not whither,
Knowing the voices—
Voices celestial—
Cannot deceive.”

Heroes.

DEAD is the old world,
With it departed
Sun-heat and fervour ;
Ice-locked the land is,
Sterile and cold.

Deep 'mid the gathered
Strata of ages
Lie fruitage and flower—
Passion and prowess,
Petrified, dead.

Wander we sad by
Shores, sea forsaken,
Where fossil and shell,
Vestiges, debris,
Cumber the strand.

Earth as a shell is—
Empty, deserted,
Tenantless, hollow—
Home of an echo,
Left by the sea—

Echo, which murmurs
Music sepulchral,
Dirge of the Godlike ;
Earth laves no longer
In the divine.

We are abandoned,
Left with the echoes,
Heroes and prophets,
Memories only,
Died with the past.

Earth and its beauty,
The splendour of suns,
The glory of stars,
The vastness of seas,
Dwarf with the race.

Visit us never,
Glimpses of glory,
Visions of Tabor,
Thunders of Sinai ;
Where are the seers ?

Sinai remaineth,
Silent its thunders ;
Jehovah, Thy voice
Never is heard there,
Moses is dead.

Prophets come many,
False and deceiving,
Mimical, puerile,
“ We are the prophets,”
Crying aloud.

Scorning the people,
While seeming to bless,
Crying to God while
Serving His altars,
Drunk with conceit.

Die these ; their memory,
Frail as their flesh is,
Earthy as earth is,
Rots—is consumed,
Nothing remains.

Earth of their weakness
Is a partaker ;
Men with their meanness
Shadow the heavens,
Blot out the sun.

Who can restore us
Glory departed ?
Light which has faded
From land and from sea ?
Heroes alone.

Would you restore us
The past that is gone ?
Would you be Godlike ?
See that God's purpose
Masters your lives.

As the old voices
Majestic be thine,
Sent forth divinely,
Ringing, not feebly,
Accents of truth.

Like the old prophets
Be fervent in spirit,
Simple, unselfish ;
Be like to theirs thy
Purenness of soul.

Came the old Prophets
Clad not in purple,
Clothed not in linen,
Bearing their burden—
Words of the Lord.

Rough were their garments,
Faces uncomely,
Stern and forbidding,
Voices they only—
Voices, not men.

Kindred they knew not ;
Hid in the desert,
Lone they and fearless,
Thunder-companioned,
Communed with God.

Long with their fellows
Tarried they never ;
Suddenly came they,
Quickly departed,
Spake but the Word.

Dead, and the people
Sought for their prophets ;
But the Almighty,
Deep 'mid the mountains,
Buried their bones—

Lest in their proneness
Idols to worship,
God were forgotten ;
God the seer-sender,
In the seer sent.

This, their life's purport—
Earthen the vessel,
God's is the glory ;
Worship and reverence
Only the Word.

So for thy fellows
Seek thou to be
Helpful, consoling,
Solace in sorrow,
Yet but a voice.

In the flesh known not ;
Known by thy message,
Quickening, reviving,
Silent engendered,
Secret begot.



Thou Knowest.*

WHEN I am dead and laid within my grave
Write over me these words—no others save
“Thou knowest ;”
For this to God shall be
My one, my only plea,
When at the measure of my days
He sums them up, and says—
“Come, pay me what thou owest.”

From men I will not plead
The sympathy I need :
Lives are not what they seem ;
The ripple of the stream
Men hear, but not the undertone ;
For God and God alone,
Amidst my wayward ways,
Has heard the burden of my days,
The spirit's inward groan.

My course has been as wide
And restless as a wandering star,

* ADAH ISAACS MENKEN, poetess and actress, was born in New Orleans, 1839, and died of consumption in Paris, August 1868. Living a turbid and irregular life, she had a vein of intense melancholy in her character, which predominates throughout her verses. When dying she expressed a wish to be buried in accordance with the rites of her religion (the Jewish), with nothing to mark her resting-place but a plain piece of wood, bearing the inscription “Thou Knowest.”—*From a Volume of American Poems, selected and edited by W. M. Rossetti.*

And some looked on to chide,
While all have stood afar.
An outcast from my place.
Pariah of my race.
Oh, God ! how prisoned 'tis to be
Within a wilderness and free.

My glory, like funereal pyre,
Was light to others, death to me—
A burning but consuming fire ;
Yet, Lord, the flame was lit by Thee.

The star may wonder at the wanderer's sweep,
And murmur at the meteor's blaze,
Not knowing that like him they keep
Their duly-ordered ways.
That of their courses this the cause—
Obedience to their being's laws ;
But Thou who hast said "Let them be,"
Thou knowest them and me.

If those with duller ears
Have never heard the music of the spheres,
What wonder if they never long
To follow on their syren song ?
Which, once heard, lingers on the ear—
Seems ever distant, ever near ;
And lures us on our way
By its deceptive sway,

Till, sick in soul and sad in mood,
It leaves us in infinitude.

If they with courses clear,
Have kept within their sphere ;
If my inheritance
Has been a deeper sense—
A spirit-vision keen,
Which moves to things unseen—
Shall theirs be only praise,
And mine be only blame ?
Theirs length of happy days,
Mine early death and shame ?

Even so, then let it be,
I urge no other plea ;
Whatever be my fate,
I nought extenuate.
But He who willed of man
Since earth and time began—
“ He reapeth as he soweth ;”
Can He curse earth which bears
The tares for sowed tares ?
God knoweth !

.
Judge not this child of strife
From out thy quiet life.
Think, ere you judge her quite
Is thy soul wholly white ?

Is there no secret stain
Which, spite thy cleansing tears,
Thy long repenting years,
A blot will still remain ?
Could'st thou with naked soul
Bare unto God the whole ?
Wilt thou, with courage like to hers,
While in thee life but feebly stirs,
Say—ere from earth thou goest—
“Thou knowest, Lord—Thou knowest?”



Fallen by the Way.

IN MEMORIAM—R. S. MENZIES, Esq., M.P.

[N the lines, confusion and stir,
A cessation of strife and the birr
Of the drums, a brother is snatched
Away, while we toiled on and watched
For the foe.

While his step was elastic and firm,
While his mood was hopeful and warm
While his eyes were lit with the flare
Of resolve, the young and the fair
Is laid low.

Fallen by the way, while we,
Who march in the ranks of the free,
May dare but a moment to pause
To mourn for the comrade that was
By our side.

Reverent we bend o'er his form
Apart from the bustle and storm,
Fresh with the promise of years,
And there falls a tribute of tears
Where he died.

Dead, but his last bugle call
Is yet prolonged o'er his fall
Still lingers in echoing air
His command to do and to dare
For the right.

O, sad and evil mischance ;
But though our faces may blanch,
'Tis not in dread or dismay—
We turn not our steps from the fray
In affright.

Firmer our weapons we grasp,
Closer our standards we clasp ;
Though our eyes be dewy and wet,
Stern our faces are set
In resolve.

From the dust of the warriors slain
There arises fresh courage again,
New endeavours, new hopes, and new faith,
From thy gates and portals, O Death,
They evolve.

O, mother, mourning thy son,
Mourn not unduly for one
Who hath fallen in vigorous years ;
Be this, through sorrow and tears,
Thy solace—

Better death's calmness and peace
Than hours of inglorious ease—
The life of a laggard is lost—
'Twas better to die at his post
For his race.

Thou gavest to freedom thy son,
And buckled his armour on,
Like the Spartan mothers of old,
Like theirs while he lieth a-cold
Be thy grief—

When his arms he no longer can wield,
When he lieth low on his shield,
Thank God for the escutcheon unstained,
For a life thou canst think on unpained,
Though 'twas brief.

A mightier mother than thou
Is claiming him from thee now,
Not unkind, though cold her embrace,
Who waits to embosom the race
In her breast.

And a mightier love than thine,
A love we cannot divine,
Through ways mysterious and dread—
Watches the loved and the dead
In their rest.

The Glory has Departed.

(After Walt Whitman.)

I.

THIS is what we have come to
Here in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and
eighty-eight ;
This is the effect of coquetting with dignitaries ;
This is the result of the Education Acts ;
This is the sum total of the general diffusion of culture and
the spread of knowledge among the people.
Hitherto we have arrived—
Here where we are studying the beautiful only in its connec-
tion with the useful and the practical ;
Here where we are bent on abrogating the merely
ornamental ;
Here where we are meditating the abolition of perpetual
pensions and the reform of the House of Lords ;
Here when real men, when persons of genuine worth, refuse
titles—won't have them on any account :
Yes, this is where we are—
Dundee has applied for the title of City, and got it.

II.

The town is ablaze with its new title--
Drapers have seized it and placed it in gilt letters in front of
their buildings ;

So have the publicans, the sellers of fish, and the importers
of fruit.

The new made citizens—see how they strut, how they
stride !

See how they are knitting their brows :

Their eyes are cast on the ground,

They are troubled in thought,

They are lost in the profoundest of speculations ;

Each and all of them are deeply cogitating.

III.

What are they cogitating ?

Questions of the deepest importance,

Questions wide as the blue vault of heaven, deep as is the
inferno :—

Who now shall be first in procession ?

Who at State banquets shall be seated the highest ?

Shall we now claim precedence of Liverpool, Glasgow, Perth
(especially Perth) ?

Perth will be brought low ;

Perth will be no longer cock of the walk ;

Perth may no longer claim pre-eminence in the river ;

Her Lord Provost shall no longer be Admiral of the Tay.

We will bite our thumbs at Perth ;

We will chuck out our tongues to her—

So shall our souls be satisfied.

IV.

Mine own town,

Dear old town !

Town with the unbroken Radical history ;

Town that ever stood first for reform and independence ;

Town where Wallace declared the national freedom ;

Town that stood for Knox and the Reformation ;

Town where the tree of liberty was planted ;

Town where Kinloch stands, menacing even yet in bronze
unjust governments.

Dear old town !

Other men are sending thee letters of gratulation.

I will send thee no letter of gratulation ;

I will send thee rather a note of condolence bordered with
black round the edges.

Other men are planning adornments for their bodies—new
robes, and new dresses ;

I will put on my old clothes,

Place a black band on my elbow, and crape on my hat ;

I will mourn in sackcloth and ashes, because foolishness cries
in the street, and because silliness has become exceed-
ingly abundant.

V.

Toll a muffled peal from the bells ;

Hang flags halfway on the standards, on spires, and on steeples ;

Hang flags half mast on the ships that come from afar ;'

Hang crape in the churches—on the galleries, on the pews,
on the pulpits—

The good old town is gone, irrevocably gone, dead,
vanished !

We will weep for the brave old town,
For the brave old town that emerged buoyantly again and
again through wars, famine, pestilence, fires, and
sacking—

The good old town of modesty, prudence, sincerity, earnest-
ness, candour,

We will follow it to its grave.

You can remain if you choose, you that have destroyed and
despatched her ;

You can welcome in with plaudits and singing her usurper,
the new City ;

The new city of emptiness, frivolity, humbug, pretension,
fussy importance ;

The new city of shoddy and jute, tallying the mind of its
rulers.

VI.

Waken up, Carlyle,

There is need for you here—

This after your thirty old volumes,

This after your life search for the true, for the real—

Look at my Lord Provost,

Look at the Magistrates, Councillors,

All of them presumably sane,

All of them at an age when most folks are done with
baubles,

Some of them grey-headed, grey-bearded,

Some of them bald-pated—

They are countrymen of yours (it is a positive fact, you cannot deny it).

Methinks I see your face of infinite scorn ;

Methinks I hear your murmur, “ Feech ! Puir cratur ! ” in your accent, inimitable Annandale.

So long, Carlyle ;

I apologise for disturbing you.

VII.

Here you, Burns, star-gazing opposite Lamb's,

Turn your neck this way ;

Never mind the lingering star for awhile ;

Never mind your Mary in heaven, she is comfortable enough ;

It is we who are vexed, we who are troubled.

Here is a theme for your satire ;

Here are the people that raise statues to you ;

Here are the people that sing “ A man's a man for a' that ” ;

Here are the people that shout “ The rank is but the guinea stamp ”—

See how they are crane-ing their necks for honours,

See how avaricious they are for gew-gaws, how their souls are athirst for trumpery titles.

No, you won't look ?

You won't listen ?

Well, perhaps after all you are better employed.

Methinks if you were alive you would leap from your pedestal and flee from the city.

VIII.

A bell tolls ;
'Tis the clock from the Steeple proclaiming the hour ;
The Old Steeple—
Take it away too ;
It will feel out of place in your new city ;
Place in its room some of your new-fangled gingerbread
architecture.
Look at it, my Lord Provost, Magistrates, Councillors—
Is it not a standing reproach to you,
There with its head 'midst the stars,
Cringing to no one for honours,
Majestical, dignified ?
Such my Lord Provost, Magistrates, Councillors—
Such should have been your attitude,
Such was the attitude of the old town.
Inherently great in itself, no one by any possibility could
make it any greater.
It needed no recognition from royalty ;
Royalty ought to have been glad that the town recognised it.

IX.

My Lord Provost, Magistrates, Councillors, if what you have
done had only involved yourself it would have been a
matter of no consequence ;
You have indelibly disgraced the town ;
You that would have exalted her, have brought her
exceedingly low ;

She is become a bye-word and reproach ;
She is as a crow that daubs itself white, and is pecked by
her neighbours.
The small villages are smiling—they poke fun at her ;
The large towns are holding their fat sides—they are bursting
with laughter ;
And as for you, my Lord Provost, Magistrates, Councillors,
Zaccheus was not a whit taller though he climbed up a tree ;
He added not an inch to his stature ; he remained as little as
ever ;
Neither are you any greater, my municipal Zaccheuses,
though you have climbed to what you think an elevated
position.
You have only made your littleness more conspicuous ;
You now ask the world, the universe, to gaze at your small-
ness of mind, to inspect your undersized souls.

X.

Yet, my Lord Provost, Magistrates, Councillors,
Perhaps this is hard on you ;
Perhaps you did not know any better ;
Perhaps you acted as you did with the best intentions ;
Perhaps you don't know what are matters of importance and
what are not matters of importance.
My Lord Provost, whether you are called Lord Provost,
Shah, Great Lama, or Big Panjandrim, that is a matter
of no importance.

Whether you take precedence of Perth, or Perth takes precedence of you, that also is as nothing.

To go to State banquets; to be noticed by Her Majesty, these also are the veriest trifles.

What are things of importance?

To be the Chief Magistrate in a town of independent men;

To be careless of honours, to be careful only to be honourable;

To keep your town clean;

To see that your townsmen are not over-pressed with poverty;

To see that the industrious are encouraged, and that the wicked also receive their deserts;—

See to these, my Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors, and you will be great.

Neglect these, and the Queen cannot make you great, though she shower titles on you thick as the snows of winter!

XI.

What a farce it is!

There is a mob outside, my Lord Provost—

A mob of grim, unhealthy, stunted, dirty-looking persons.

Where do you come from, Mob?

We come from the slums of the town.

What do you want, Mob?

Air, health, homes, better surroundings, protection from jerry-builders and rapacious landlords.

Get away, Mob;

My Lord Provost is busy ;
He is immersed in studying an affair of the greatest
importance ;
He is engaged with the tailor ordering his new robes.
Can't we see the Bailies ?
No ; get away, Mob ;
They, too, are busy ;
They, too, are immersed in studying an affair of the greatest
importance—
They are assisting the tailor.
Ichabod.



To the Singers, to the Chanters.

*The tyrants of caste and their old selfish laws
Went down to the beat of the drum,
Heads rolled on the scaffold 'mid frantic applause,
The day of the People had come !*

*The idols of Wealth and the symbols of Wrong,
The prisons unhallowed and grim,
Were wrecked in an ocean of blood to the song
That pealed as Humanity's hymn.*

*And armies went forth to its war-breathing strain
To battle with Liberty's foes.
'Mid Death's gory wreckage on many green plain
Its echoes triumphantly rose.*

*Purged from the old things that had fettered its soul
And hung on its heart as a ban,
A nation rejoiced in the liberty's goal
The poet had brought unto man.*

—W. Allan's "Democratic Chants."

TO the singers, to the chanters, in the Army of the Free,
While the air is still vibrating with your songs of
liberty :

I am also one among you ; as I walk amid the ranks,
'Tis my glory but to think on our unconquerable phalanx.

And I love the rough contention, and the elemental shock
Of the storm that scatters windrows* and reveals the naked
rock.

But your cries for carnage pall me, and your trumpet tones
of hate
And revenge is swinish feeding for the heirs of high estate.

* Sea Drift.

I have heard you ; I have listened to those burning words of
yours,

True to our hot-blooded nature when the battle smoke
obscures.

But there dawns a better morning on great Freedom's battle
plain ;

Let us haste as ointment bearers, not as riflers of the slain.

And more than weapons welded by the armourer's forges is
Keen Excalibar, the two-edged sword of truth and
righteousness—

Waged in conflicts whose vast issues broader, deeper reaching
are

Than the brittle treaties, hate-fused at the reeking fires of
war.

I have listened, I have heard you, but my bliss is not
complete,

For you mingled not with bitter due proportion of the sweet.

There was grumbling by the bassoon, and the rattle of the
drum,

Low, deep tones of trombone thunder, much bravura and
alarum.

Will the singing of the future always be on low octaves,
With no room for children's voices or for sunshine in its staves ?

Is democracy all thunder under sombre skies and dark ?
May it not, when days are sunny, pipe as sweetly as the
lark ?

And the daily diapason of the music of the spheres
May not be completely sounded by the morning chanticleers.

Did I hear within the chanting notes of malice and of hate,
Cruel, greedy cries for vengeance and extinction of the
State ?

Are we altogether brothers in the Army of the Free ?
Is our mission quite fraternal and to all humanity ?

Are the Kings and Queens excluded from the bliss that is to
be—
Shall there be but part forgiveness, not a general amnesty ?

Oh, my brothers of the farmyard, of the factory, of the
forge,
Is our dearest wish to fatten in an endless age of gorge,

With amusements in the mauling of the tyrants battened
down,
And the buffeting of Princes dispossessed of rank and crown ?

O you singers, to your chanting, if I say in kindness
That I love not empty vaunting, would you take it aught
amiss ?

I have tasted the outpouring of the vessel of your wrath,
And it does not hold the vigour which a natural tonic hath.

And I miss the pungent flavour of the real Whitman wine,
Blending with the old aromas, that of calamus and pine,

With the odours of the prairies and the breath of man's
desires,
And of gradual beauty springing from the past as it expires ;

But yours have a cellar dankness, as of methylated drops,
As of doctored second brewings of the refuse of the hops.

But I ask you, is it venom that your wingéd arrows tips,
Or a sort of tartar acid caught between the teeth and lips ?

And your rage, is it theatric—do you only act a part ?
Ultra-democratic casings sometimes hold a kindly heart.

But I judge the age too earnest for histrionic storm and
show,
These are times for quiet persistence, not for idle bravado.

And I better like the marching of the veterans, cool and
staid,
Quiet, resolute, determined, than the loud fanfaronade.

Yes, I know it, O my brothers, there is room for bitterness ;
For the record of the ages is the tale of our distress.

And there rises up to heaven from the tophets of the past
Bitter words from the downtrodden and the cries of the out-
cast.

Would you lay the grizzly phantoms, gibbering, beckoning,
urging you?
Do not heal an old injustice by injustice that is new.

Oppress not the old oppressors ; let oppression cease to be,
For I wot a change of masters is not perfect liberty.

They will vanish, these old spectres ; they will vanish with
the night :
They abide not in the conscience of a race that walks
upright.

You are marching on, my brothers ; and I charge you do not
faint ;
But the strength that is divinest is the strength that has
restraint.

Learn, my brothers ! giant shouldered, brawny muscled, iron
nerved,
The omnipotence of forces that are calmest and reserved.

Jove, the strong, was ever God-like, though he sped his
thunderbolts
Only on the fit occasion, in formidable assaults.

And the genial warmth and forcing of the glowing summer
sun

Brings again the ordered beauty by volcanoes overthrown.

O ye singers, O ye chanters, how unseemly your menace ;
In the perfect love of freedom hatred does not find a place.

For the fault was not in pageant, not in symbol, not in
crown ;

But in falseness and pretension in the king and in the clown.

And thy brightness, O new era, shining down in golden
shafts,

Will expose unkingly kinghood and the bunglers at their
crafts,

And within the blazoned advent of a false humanity,
Show uncleaner spirits entering with the old supremacy.

For the true redeemers never come with flaunting pride and
show ;

But with lowliness of aspect their beneficence bestow.

Do you mourn your lowly station, and the meanness of your
birth,

Royal heir of all the beauty of this star-encircled earth ?

In magnificence go equal Mother Nature, whence you came,
By nobility of purpose and unselfishness of aim.

Wear thy suit of home-spun bravely, and the grandeur of
your soul

Will reveal itself and crown you with a golden aureole.

Be thy emblem not the eagle, but the snow-white dove that
brings

In her beak a branch of olive even unto falling kings,

And the message—"Leave the arctic, barren splendour of
your state ;

Warmth and love dwell on the levels ; choose the common,
and be great."

Singers, chanters, your evangel seemed a cruel carnival,
I have urged the nobler gospel of a Freedom unto all.



Coercion.

SHE comes in a garment of whiteness,
As pure and unsullied as snow,
And her lovers blind with her brightness
Are bending, nerveless, and low
At her feet.

Their hearts within them are craven
Because of the crown which she wears,
Where Law and Order are graven
And the sword of Justice she bears ;
And they greet

Her coming with singing, and raise her
An altar to serve as a shrine,
And her priests call on people to praise her
As a goddess, sacred, divine,
In her fane.

And on her face to be seen is
An air majestic and mild—
Aye, meek as a mother her mien is,
Who bringeth the rod to her child
But in pain.

O, brothers, beware of her seeming,
For devious and dark are her ways,
Her eyes with hatred are gleaming,
Though she comes and ensnares and betrays
With a kiss.

And her visage that hideous and sour is,
They have daubed alabaster and red,
And deep her passion for power is
As a grave that yawns for the dead—
An abyss—

Insatiable, ever in hunger ;
And her shining garments of white
But cover the robes of her anger
She wears when she cometh to smite
In her rage.

They were rent by hands that had pleaded,
They are stained and ruddy with gore
By victims whose groans were unheeded,
And her thirst she is waiting for more
To assuage.

O, brothers, beware ! her embraces
Are strangulation and death ;
The air where the dead have their place is
More pure than her poisonous breath.
Have a care—

Though she don the garment of Freedom
And walk in Liberty's guise,
She is one to shun and to flee from,
And the lust that lurks in her eyes
Is a snare.

And dumb is she lest her speaking
Should betray the Delilah of old,
And men on her should be wreaking
Their vengeance for cruelties untold,
And should foil

Her in sin ; for her voice is
As the hiss of a serpent in hate,
That hath seized her prey and rejoices
As she crushes it down to its fate
In her coil.

But there rises against her to Heaven
The cries of the people opprest,
Whose hearts with anguish were riven,
When in pride she lay on the breast
Of the kings,

And brought forth her brood of destroyers,
The callous children of Cain,
And fashioned for priestly employers
The engines of torture and pain,
And their stings ;

When she wrought her fierce desolations,
And made in destruction a path,
When in power she trod down the nations
And made them drink of her wrath
As of wine.

She hath turned the needy from judgment,
The cause of the many despised ;
In her heart no pity hath lodgment,
And only the few she hath prized
At her shrine.

It is she, Might's Thuggish upholder,
The strangler of freedom and right ;
It is she with the ages grown bolder
That has ventured from darkness and night
Unto day.

But her steps lead down to perdition,
And her lust doth never abate,
And error and blind superstition
Are her attendants in state,
Yea, alway.

In her path no verdure upspringeth,
Her feet have the scorch of a flame,
And blight and mildew she bringeth,
And want, and sorrow, and shame,
On her wait.

Her trail is a record of slaughters,
And behind her, white in the sun,
Are bleaching the bones of the martyrs
And those to death she hath done
In her hate.

Behind her is sobbing and crying,
And the falling of tears as of rain ;
Like the rush of the wind is the sighing
That follows of anguish, and pain,
And distress.

Legion her name—she was known as
Moloch, Ashtaroth, Baal ;
And once she sat on the throne as
A Queen, the proud Jezebel—
Murderess.

Yet you she calls on, my brothers,
Whose kin and sires she hath slain ;
To menace and manacle others,
To capture and cripple with pain—
To disown.

Beware of her cunning devices,
She hath planned destruction and strife,
And she that to slaughter entices,
In her hands is hiding a knife
For your own.

How long, O Lord, are her slaughters ?
Shall her sword never yield to the rust ?
Shall the severance of sons and of daughters
By her envy, suspicion, distrust,
Be for aye ?

Take the vile enchantress and bind her
In her home of shadow and night,
So men may grow humane and kinder,
And walk in the love and the light
Of the day.



To Ireland.

O ERIN ! hear us where thou sittest,
On thy desolate rock by the sea,
Chain-bound, while thy harp, as is fittest,
Lies tuneless and scorned by thee.

High Heaven's fair portion of freedom
We have not divided with thee ;
We have smitten and stricken thee dumb,
And doomed thee in serfdom to be.

And thy cheeks are wet, and the pallor
And pinched look of poverty's thine,
Where thou clingest, with resolute valour,
'Mid the sea foam's bitterest brine.

Rages round thee the storm, and fierce is
The noise of the bellowing wind ;
But a voice to thy solitude pierces—
'Tis Justice, benignant and kind.

'Tis her voice with our hearts interceding,
Through the clash and clamour of creeds ;
For thee she is plaintively pleading,
Pariah, 'mid tangled seaweeds.

Till our hearts within us are burning
Because of our sister enslaved,
Penitent to thee we are turning,
We have sworn that thou shalt be saved.

Thy look of reproach and of sadness,
Let it fade away from thine eye ;
For thee there is store yet of gladness—
The hour of thy freedom draws nigh.

For thy years of trouble and sorrow,
Of contumely, insult, and shame,
Now a garment of sackcloth we borrow
And wear it because of our blame.

O, sister, we scorned thee and hated,
And, boasting ourselves to be free,
We have seen thee by bigotry baited,
We mastered and manacled thee.

But the stars the heavens have lettered
With the verdict of Heaven's conclaves—
“The nation that nation has fettered
Is itself a nation of slaves.”

Our conscience stings us with its anguish,
We are haunted by spectres of want ;
From lands where to live is to languish
Stalks famine, the fleshless and gaunt.

Our shame is the shame of our fathers ;
The heritage left us—thy hate ;
And the recompense injury gathers,
The vengeance nought can abate.

Yea, even in our name they have wronged thee,
And given thy homes to the flame ;
With merciless myrmidons thronged thee,
And panderers guiltless of shame.

But lies with their mouths they have spoken,
For our hearts are in union with thee,
In concord that ne'er shall be broken
In the days and ages to be.

Let their name go down through the ages
A theme for immortal satire,
Let them blacken on history's pages,
Who liberty dragged through the mire ;

Who would mock the people, and strangle
In its birth a nation's desire ;
Who instincts would murder and mangle,
And let loose the sword and the fire.

O, ye men of force and decision,
Hath it not been written of old
That the Lord will laugh with derision
At tyrants unscrupulous, bold ?

Ye are but the foam on the river,
Do you dream to hinder its course ?
Nay, the tide of freedom for ever
Flows on with majestic force.

Glendale & Co.

(After Walt Whitman.)

THE Firm of Glendale & Co.—

A Firm of undoubted respectability,
Its name honoured on the Exchange,
Its bills eagerly sought after, readily discounted,
Its ramifications extensive, its agencies scattered throughout
the globe.

Once on a time the Firm small and unimportant,
It has grown great from small beginnings ;
Now its factories cover acres of ground,
They have streets running through them ;
They are a city in themselves.
The buildings palatial and mammoth,
Noway showy, built for endurance ;
Its chimneys tall like Egyptian obelisks ;
The clock towers aspiring also—
Lit up at night, the discs flare like angry eyes in watchful
supervision, impressing on the minds of the workers the
necessity of improving the hours and minutes purchased
by Glendale & Co.

The Firm dominates the Town, it is in a sense ubiquitous ; it
pervades it.

The workers are thousands strong :

Every morning a city-full of men, women, and children
 march through its portals ;
 Every meal-hour they are disgorged,
 The Town always in excitement, stir, hubbub, commotion ;
 The call-boys clatter at early five ;
 The bells clang, the whistles shriek at regular intervals—
 The workers—slaves of the ring, hurrying to and fro in
 obedience to summons—
 The patter of their feet like the tread of an army ;
 There is a constant jostling and rumbling of lorries,
 A tremendous throbbing of beams and pistons,
 An incessant rattle of looms.
 The atmosphere permeated with dust,
 The faces of the people engrained with dirt and grime,
 Their voices husky with the fluff settled on the throat and
 lungs—
 It is questionable indeed if the townspeople have any real
 personal identity at all ;
 If they are not really themselves part and parcel a product of
 Glendale & Co. ;
 Questionable if its fluff is not also on their souls, if the
 interests of the great Firm have not dimmed their mental
 vision, and clouded their moral perceptions.
 At night the Firm still predominant, still supreme,
 The flame of its foundry blasts reflected on the heavens,
 casting a ruddy radiance as far as the confusion of stars
 in the Milky Way.

The ships of Glendale & Co. are a navy—
 You may see them loading and unloading at the wharves,

You may hear the noise of the donkey engines,
The swish of the ropes rushing through the pulleys—
The huge bales swinging in the air with sudden rise and
 swift descent,
The burly porters clutching at the bales, storing them in the
 waiting waggons.
The ships sail far and near,
They sail for tropical regions, they invade the ice in the
 northern seas.
In obedience to the behests of Glendale—
The Hindoo toils on the burning plains of India,
The stolid Russian peasant labours on his steppes,
The English miner toils in dirt and darkness ;
For it seals are slaughtered in thousands,
Leviathan himself, for it is hunted and pierced with the
 harpoon—
Dying not without sublimity—to the end that his carcase
 may yield the lubricating oil essential to the processes of
 Glendale & Co.

Great the output of the Firm ;
The machinery daily swallowing tons of the raw material,
Daily spueing forth tons of the finished webs.
It spins fine material, it spins coarse and rough material ;
The blushing bride presses with her snowy limbs the soft
 white products of its looms,
The Eastern odalisque in the harem treads on the carpets of
 its manufacture—
The Royal Squadron spreads the canvas of the Firm proudly
 in the favouring wind.

The Firm equal to any demand—

Should the globe at any time take the chills, or grow old or rheumatic, the Firm could supply it on the shortest of notice with a hap-warm, to put on in its eternal spinning through space.

A great Firm ! a wonderful Firm.

Glendale, of Glendale & Co., is a methodical man,

A man of undoubted honesty, of unquestionable morality.

Proud of his merchant ancestry, as any lord of his pedigree :

The Firm to him as a trust—

His ambition, to make it grow greater, to hand over his charge to the next in succession in increased splendour ;

Political matters he has no time to attend to ;

For the solution of social problems he has no relish ;

Publicity he hates—

Nothing diverts him from the trust ;

He prides himself on being practical, on not being a dreamer,
a sentimentalist.

Assiduous himself in attending to the interests of the Firm,
he expects from his workers an equal assiduity—

Their individuality must be lost—swallowed up in the Firm.

Glendale is methodical—

The works an enlargement of the man ;

There nothing imperfect ; no repairing, no patching—

The imperfect machine cast into the furnace ;

Every machine with its duplicate prepared, ready to be put
in its place.

Imperfect men and women cannot be re-cast—cannot be rejuvenated—

They could not endure the fiery furnace ;

They must be discharged—

To do otherwise would be to break down the system :

The works are for workers ;

The workhouses and benevolent institutions are for the old and infirm.

Why regret the harshness of the system ?

It is inevitable :

Glendale himself is only a part of it.

An army, the workers of Glendale & Co. ;

No army better drilled or more efficient.

Every week Glendale assembles his officers together,

They sit in solemn conclave,

They deliberate long and anxiously—

Every one answerable for his own department.

With ordinary workers Glendale comes not into contact,

His orders percolate down through various strata of officials ;

His fiat absolute as that of the Czar of all the Russias ;

He is, as an impersonal force—the lever that sets everything into motion, that stills everything into no motion.

He says, and it is done—

So much work on hand—so many workers taken on ;

So little work on hand—so many workers discharged :

The system, as perfect as the automatic machine that works with the penny shot in the slot.

Glendale is a moral man—

The works have also a tone of morality—

The morality is that of the decalogue ;

It extends as far as “Thou shalt not,”

It prohibits unchastity, it disallows debt, it protests against
the establishment of public-houses in the neighbourhood.

Glendale is a man of domestic habits.

His home apart from the town, standing secure from observa-
tion, in the quiet of the suburbs ;

Round it high walls and tall ancestral trees—

The latter the abode of a colony of rooks

(Rooks, true conservatives—no lovers of newness).

Din of the town not heard here, or only heard in a far-off
subdued hum, adding to the prevailing sense of repose.

Town seen in its picturesque aspects only ;

Seen the tall chimneys, the spires of the churches and
hospitals,

Between them the haze ; over them the glamour of distance ;

Not seen the dingy alleys, the filthy closes.

Extensive landscape, sea-scape :—

A serenity as of Heaven.

The broad river still in summer as a Highland lake,

The sailing vessels slow gliding,

The little boats tacking and re-tacking,

The paddle and screw steamers churning the waters, leaving
in the air serpentine trails of smoke,

The seagulls, flecks of white, skimming the river's surface, or
sailing through the blue of the sky ;

The broad opening estuary,
The venerable castle, keeping up a brave show of strength
and defiance—
The fashionable suburb sunning itself under its protection,
The long stretch of sand bar,
The white coombs of the waves breaking on the bar,
The guiding lighthouses.
The gardens and vineries of spacious extent ;
The product, vegetable and fruits in their season.
Inside the house, ease, culture, comfort, refinement,
Pictures; some of them Scriptural, "The Rich Man and
Lazarus," "The Descent from the Cross," "The Light
of the World ;"
The Library well stocked ; Carlyle, Ruskin, Emerson, in
evidence.
(The prophets no longer stoned or deposited in splendid
sepulchres—
Their works immured in morocco editions, reviewed in the
magazines, daintily talked of in the drawing-rooms :
Glendale, I warn you in passing, these writers are more
dangerous to you and your order than an army of
dynamitards.)

Glendale at home, not so systematic, human rather and
sympathetic ;
His servants old faithful retainers.
He more servant than master—
Studying his servants' ways, putting up with their humours ;
In his park an aged horse, no longer put in harness, pensioned
off for past services.

The home of the workers,
 Some of them two or three roomed, comfortable enough ;
 Some of them—abodes of the lowest—miserable dens.
 A sample picture of the slums—
 A conspicuous building towering above its neighbours,
 A Babel Tower, with its ten flats divided into single rooms ;
 Entrance dingy, dark, discoloured,
 Stairs unclean, the sinks in the passages sending forth
 unpleasant effluvia,
 Plaster broken, streaming with moisture ;
 Scarcely a whole pane in the windows—newspapers battered
 up in place of panes ;
 Tall chimneys in the neighbourhood vomiting forth smoke
 and soot,
 Mill ponds sending forth oily, noxious exhalations.
 The inhabitants—hereditary helots—
 Low-browed, ugly, forbidding,
 Grown-up gutter children—producers themselves of gutter
 children,
 Rum drinkers, fiery, quarrelsome.
 The disorder, confusion of Tophet ;
 Frequent there the brawl, the brutal assault, the shrieks and
 yells of murder,
 Robbery, prostitution, vice ;
 Troublesome quarters for the police.
 The rents gathered weekly—the key left in the door as an
 indication of bankruptcy when the dweller decamps.
 Not unkind to each other, the inhabitants, in cases of dis-
 tress.

What have you to do with all this, Glendale ?
Did you not pay them their penny a day ?

Yet listen a moment, Glendale, of Glendale & Co.
I have been brooding over these things,
I have been thinking over your perfect automatical penny-in-the-slot system ; over your home in the suburbs ; over these dens in the slums—

The conclusion ? That you are not such a practical man as you deem yourself to be, or as others deem you to be ;
That in spite of the Scriptures we can only think of you as *raca*—a fool.

Do you deem that such a state of matters can continue ?
Glendale, you are the man that has built his house upon the sand :

Assuredly the flood will come, if not in your day, at least in the day of your successors.

Glendale ! there is a spiritual law of supply and demand which is higher than the law of the economists :

The demand of that law is that your relationship with your workers shall be human and sympathetic.

You cannot get rid of your obligation by appealing to the necessity of securing cheap labour, to compete with the foreigner.

You use men and women as machines at the peril of yourself ;
to the danger of society :

The demand of that law will not be evaded ;
It will be paid in some fashion or another—
God's books always balance ;

For the neglect of your workers you have the slums and its consequent miseries ;

Your attention to your workers would be as certainly repaid with blessings.

What say you, Glendale ?

You are no worse than your neighbours ?

Possibly not. Perhaps a great deal better.

You have done more than many ;

It is evident that you are not satisfied in your conscience with your own arguments, anent cheap labour and foreign competition ;

You have done more for their comfort than the law compelled ;

You also may be the victim of a system.

Still it remains true that you, the Industrial Chieftain, are a failure—

You will not compare with the Chieftains of other days.

Glendale, the old barbarian, the Choctaw Indian Chief, had a higher sense of duty towards his dependents than you have ;

The Choctaw Chief knew not the benefits of civilisation ; he had not his duty thundered at him by the modern prophets ;

When the tribe was poor, he was poor ; when he was rich, the tribe shared his abundance ;

The idea of comfort, secluded ease, apart from the comfort and ease of his tribe, to him would have been a monstrous conception ; an altogether unthinkable proposition ;

It concerned his honour to be as hungry as the hungriest.
He was as opposed to the doctrine of equality as you are ;
But his leadership consisting in leading, not in appropriating
results ;
It went further in times of depression than a vicarious
benevolence, in donations to soup kitchens.

Glendale ! I think I saw you the other day ;
It was at a meeting to greet a Distinguished Traveller.
Distinguished Traveller had penetrated to the heart of Africa.
The natives not acquainted with the blessings of civilisation,
of trade, and of commerce,
Went naked, or nearly so, lived in huts in the forest, wore
rings in their noses—
Unhappy benighted natives !
Natives not so anxious to receive the blessings of civilisation
as could be wished, opposed the progress of Distinguished
Traveller ;
Some of them had to be hanged, some of them had to be
shot—
Action of Intrepid Traveller quite justifiable in your eyes—
I saw you and others applauding him as spoke in his own
justification :
It was necessary to impress on the mind of the natives the
wholesomeness of discipline.
Natives idolatrous, worshippers of wooden gods ;
Distinguished Traveller of a religious turn of mind—this also
highly satisfactory :

In a moment of dire distress he cried unto Heaven—he informed the Supreme that if he were relieved he would mention the fact in the newspapers—

(Great concession this on the part of Distinguished Traveller—not always inclined to share publicity with any one).

Distinguished Traveller was relieved ; strictly faithful to his word he mentioned the fact in the newspapers.

For these things—for his devotion to commerce, for his courteous recognition of religion !—you honoured and hurraed him,

You bestowed upon him the freedom of the town.

Some day the projects and predictions of the Distinguished Traveller will be carried out :

The native will become ashamed of his nakedness, he will no more wear rings in his nose, he will quit his hut in the forest,

He will give up his wooden gods, he will become as enlightened in matters of religion as the Distinguished Traveller ;

For these things you will give the native the blessings of civilisation—you will erect him slums like to those of the Overgate and Scouringburn ;

The slaver will no more carry away his children—they will be brought up on the half-time system ;

He will no longer eat his enemies ; he will consume the earnings of his children—the necessity for cheap labour unfortunately not allowing you to employ himself.

Blessings on the valour, the enterprise of the Distinguished Traveller !

Glendale, these are not looked upon as proper ideas ;
The Press neither encourages the ventilation of such doctrines
nor their promulgator ;
It loves better the prophet and prophecy of smooth things.
The accepted doctrines—
That a State is eminently practical which looks after the
improvement of its breed of cattle ;
That a State is in danger of becoming communistic which
looks after the condition of its toilers, which concerns
itself with the redemption of gutter children.
Have no alarm, Glendale !
You are eminently respected, you will continue to be respected,
You will receive in life the exceeding great reward of the
applause of blatant money-worshippers—
When your end draws nigh your high-feed physician will
become extremely anxious ;
He will advise that your system needs toning up, generous
living, foreign travel, if your valuable life is to be
spared.
But, after all these things the end will come, and as certain
as the end will come adulatory sermons nearly sufficient
of themselves to waft you into Heaven.

Meanwhile, Glendale, what of Lazarus in the slums ?
He becomes more and more addicted to rum-drinking—
The fluff makes him asthmatic—the rum gives him relief :
Do not judge him too hardly because of the rum :
It may lead him occasionally to do foolish actions ;
But you, too, tried to stave off from you the bareness of life ;

It is all he has for your house in the suburbs, for your comfort and ease, for your gardens, for the well-stocked library ;

In old age it will have to make up for the high-feed physician, for the toning up, generous living, foreign travel.

He, too, must die :

There will be no funeral sermons, no costly coffin, no autobiographical column in the newspapers ;

In death as in life his habitation may be the slums—his final destination a grave in the pits ;

The general verdict—addicted to drinking habits :

So society consoles itself, and lightly gives harsh truths the go-by.

But what concerns you and me, Glendale, is not earthly verdicts, but the verdicts at the other end—

The ugly comparisons that will be made about your opportunities and his opportunities, and, God help me ! about my opportunities too—

The judgments of Heaven do not alway coincide with the opinions of the Cowgate.

Heaven deems a man of more value than many sparrows, possibly also it will look upon him as of more importance than many cattle, or of the production of so many jute bags.

Songs from "The Babes in the Wood." *

"WE ARE THE LORDS OF AIR."

WE are the lords of air :
O who so free as we ?
We have no thought or care,
We pay no one a fee.
We build in thorny brake,
On tree or marshy fen ;
From no one leave we take,
None ask us how or when.
O yes, O yes, we pay !
We fill the world with song.
Who listens to our lay
Shall keep no trouble long.

"I AM THE ROBIN BOLD."

I am the Robin bold ;
A beggar I by trade ;
I come in winter cold
To beg a bit of bread ;
And when I food request,
By children loved am I ;
They know my blood-red breast,
They know my sparkling eye.

* "The Babes in the Wood," a Juvenile Cantata: J. R. Parlane & Co., Paisley.
Words by J. Y. Geddes ; Music by J. Kerr.

When summer comes I go
And join my woodland mates :
What then care I for snow,
Or little curly pates ?
So with my roguish air,
Through life I pick my way :
Be weather foul or fair,
I fare well every day.

“ IT IS THE LADDER GOLDEN.”

It is the ladder golden,
The lark's highway of song,
Left in the ages olden
By Bethel's angel throng.
When skyward he is wending,
Its steps I see him soar,
By strain on strain ascending
To heaven's open door.

But still, when upward soaring,
His eyes are on our nest,
While into song outpouring
The love that fills his breast.
Yea, when to heaven nearest—
Nigh to the golden gate—
'Tis then he holds me dearest—
His faithful, loving mate.

“ I AM THE WARY WREN.”

I am the wary Wren,
A tiny bird you see,
Yet earth her wisest men
Could want as well as me.
Who sees the empires fall,
There's nought beyond His ken,
And in her dainty hall
He sees the little wren.

Where moss grows soft and deep,
We build a shelter warm,
But little know of sleep
For dread of coming harm.
For our dear nestlings' sake
Our patience never tires,
For little hearts may shake
And swell with big desires.

“ I AM OX-EYE.”

I am ox-eye, so pert and spry, in parti-coloured guise,
And peaceful too, altho' it's true I have got two black eyes.
Not overdone, a greasy bone would just my palate suit,
To eat with zest when in my nest within the hollow root.

I'm impudent, they say, when bent on fighting for my own ;
But that's a sin I'll still sin in while I can pick a bone.

As it may hap, I'm named Black Cap, Tom-tit, or chance
Pick Cheese ;
Give me my bite, I'll take no slight : you call me what you
please.

“ALTHOUGH I WEAR A COAT.”

Although I wear a coat of homely speckled brown,
There's music in my throat that can't be noted down.
I am the singing thrush—O no ! I am not wrong—
From ev'ry wayside bush I pour my burning song.

The minstrel of the grove, the bard of lowly ways,
Pleased with the common love, I seek no higher praise.
Attired in humble guise, I sing of home and hearth ;
Ah ! dearest to the wise the common joys of earth.

“AWAY TO THE FOREST OLD.”

Away, away to the forest old ; from under each leafy tree
We will watch the villain bold at his cruel knavery.

From under the sturdy oak, where it dreams of stormy seas,
And of days when glory broke o'er the battle and the breeze,
From the prickles of the fir, with its garb of evergreen,
Where the aspens are astir, though no wind hath ever been.

Where the gay laburnum shakes all its golden tresses down,
Where the thorn in blossom breaks, or is hung with berries
brown ;

From the green and mossy glades, where at eve the conies
play,
From the dark and covert shades where the sun can send no
ray.

“O BROTHER, DO NOT FEARFUL BE.”

O brother, do not fearful be,
Nor dream of dreadful things ;
Those rustling sounds come near to me—
They are from angel wings.
The night is dark, but do not fear ;
O list, that gentle sigh !
'Tis not the dying wind you hear—
'Tis mother, who is nigh.

O once I dreamt I gazed upon
That happy land we know,
And there I saw the great white throne,
And mother bending low.
I knew her, though an angel fair,
Her face was so like thine ;
I heard her whisper as in prayer—
“Dear Lord, those babes of mine !”

“Dear Lord, the babes Thou gavest me,
O if it be Thy will,
Let me their guardian angel be
To shield them from all ill.”

And do you think He would not hear
Our sainted mother's cry ?
O let us sink to slumber, dear—
'Tis mother who is nigh.

“A MAIDEN FAIR TO ME IS KNOWN.”

A maiden fair to me is known,
Guarded by innocence alone,
She dwells within the wood ;
Her door stands wide ajar all day ;
None from her help will vainly pray ;
Sweet is her every mood.

When every morn I make my call,
She shares with me her little all,
For dearly she loves me ;
And by her soft, white hands caressed,
I'm often to her bosom pressed ;
The truest friends are we.

And there, while blushing as the rose,
She tells me secrets none else knows
(For no tell-tale am I) ;
What makes her happy all the day,
How sometimes, too, for friends away
She heaves the secret sigh.

I'll haste unto her window sill,
I'll peck the panes with sturdy bill,
And bid her come with me
To rescue these two orphans dear,
Asleep in innocency here,
Beneath the greenwood tree.

“NOW TO OUR OWN DOMAIN.”

Now to our own domain we'll wander back again,
Our wings unfold for wood and wold,
And aye our song shall be :
Through summer warm and winter storm
The joy of liberty.

At eve or matin hour, from every bush and bower,
Our hymn of praise we'll gladly raise,
And aye our song shall be :
From day till night the sweet delight,
The joy of liberty.



The Coming King—To-morrow.

NOW, To-morrow, Yesterday,
Behold ! these three are one ;
But we are of the morning,
And wait the waking sun.
The King, the King, he cometh !
We children cry, " All hail !"
The dull to-day deceived us,
To-morrow will not fail.

The dead Past and its sorrow
Lies low in buried state ;
Let age with memory linger,
But we anticipate.
To wearied eyes and feeble
Earth wears an ashen hue ;
But youth is a creator
That frames the world anew.

The sparkle we of foam-bells,
The blush from roses drawn,
Distilled with May-day dew-drops
And tints of dreamy dawn.
The rose-tipped peaks of cloudland
Have paths for children's feet ;
There day-dreams are as manna,
Or store of golden wheat.

Then come, thou bright to-morrow,
Thou art the coming king ;
Come with thy reign of gladness,
And stay all sorrowing.
Yet bring the sky of shadow,
And space for falling tears,
To arch the heavens with glory
When smiling hope appears.



Hector and Alice.

(After Walt Whitman.)

I.

ADAM, Eve, Paradise--

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil,
The insinuating snake, the temptation, the fall—
Is the story a myth?—a fanciful dream of a poet or a
prophet?

Nay, it is true ; true then, true now, and for ever ;
Not a soul comes into the world, but that instant a conflict
commences ;

Heaven and hell are for ever at variance,
Round us are arrayed the forces of good and of ill,
Above and before the beckoning angels,
By our sides the misleading, plausible, spirits of evil.

Paradise ?

Was Eden fairer than this ?

Look down from the hillside and heather,
Above a serene summer sky, flecked with a flock of little
white clouds ;

Peaceful and still the valley below,
How intense are the colours, how vividly green the culti-
vated patches ;

In autumn how golden the grain 'mid the wildness surround-
ing.

The glen—a wet pebble encased in a setting of boulder—
Cropping up always the moorland ;
Next the fields, the bog and morass, with the waving marsh
 cotton, the red and mauve heaths, and the grass, silver-
 shackled, in trembling commotion ;
By the base of the hill the road winding, fringed by the clumps
 of the bracken, overlooked by the nodding foxglove.
In the heart of the valley the river, even now in haste and
 impetuous ;
Contributing rills rushing down from the side of the
 mountain ;
Little woods and circlets of trees—
Trees of the birch, of the fir, and the ash, with a thick
 undergrowth of blae-berry bushes.

In the midst of the glen the Kirkton.
Round the kirk with its spire, the manse, the school, the
 inn, and the little shop of the traders ;
Farms with steadings substantial.
Cots of the cottars on the hillside, built of the boulders,
 propped up with strong wooden staves, surrounded with
 feal dykes ;
At the back the firewood for winter, and a great pile of peat ;
In the front the patch of potatoes and pot-herbs, and a
 straggling array of old-fashioned flowers ;
Round all the hills everlasting, melancholy, bleak-looking,
 and bold,
Upon them the shepherds and dogs, with cattle and sheep,
 quietly grazing.

Within the glen simple pursuits and simple affections,
The homes and the lives patriarchal and pure ;
Beyond the hills, the unknown world seething with sin and
temptation.

The scene not always peaceful, not always serene,
Sometimes Nature here, has paroxysms of wrath :
Of a sudden the clouds gather together in battalions and
hurtle together ;
There is a darkness above and a weird light below ;
The cattle huddle together,
The birds in the shade are silent, cowering, and timorous ;
There is the sharp fierce snap of the thunder, prolonged to
snarling and growling as of that of beasts of prey ;
The rumbling reverberation dying away among the hills,
The rain coming down in a deluge,
The stream rushing down in spate, foaming and furious,
But now all is hushed, quiet, peaceful.

II.

Alice, who was she ?
The glen had many fair daughters, healthy, rosy, good-
looking,
Strong full-bodied lasses, thinking nothing of toil and
exertion,
Lasses fit to be mates and mothers of brave sturdy men,
Yet Alice, the fairest of all,
In her face a touch of refinement,

Her head dainty and carried erect, crowned with a glory of
golden locks,
The lips half apart—in her eyes an innocent look,
Her nature confiding and open, yet Celtic,
At times impulsive, impetuous—lurking latent in her the
fiery soul of her sires.

Hector the strongest and tallest of all the sons of the glen,
First in leaping and racing, foremost in games of skill, leader
in tracking and shooting the deer; not ashamed of
commoner toil.

Brave, manly, yet gentle,
Nothing small in his nature, generous, open-hearted and
handed,
His laurels none grudging.

Lovers these two—it has ever been so
Since the beginning, bravery weds beauty, and fair women
fall as the prizes to men of prowess and valour.
Since when had their courting commenced? They knew not.
At school they were always together; in the quarrels of child-
hood he was her boyish defender.
In the glen they all understood—Alice for Hector, Hector
for Alice:
So it was ordered by Nature; no one dreamed of coming
between them.

Smooth ran the course of their love,
The parents smiled in quiet approval,

A simple idyll of the hills.

Noway ashamed of their love—he proud of her beauty, she
proud of his prowess.

Tranquil their love ; but deep and abiding.

Dearer to Hector than all the applause and the badges, the
quiet touch of Alice, unseen by the crowd, at the close
of competing.

To Alice the joy of her heart to walk alone by his side, to
feel secure in his strength, to lean on his arm on the
rough paths over the mountains.

III.

Is love a dweller with you ?

Lowly your lot—do you deem yourself safe and secure ?

Be sure in your confident moments the spirit of evil is near
you.

Name it as you choose—

Chance, circumstance, devil, there it is, though lurking unseen,
gliding slowly but surely towards you.

Read the old story of Job ;

Ever and aye before the throne Almighty, Eternal, came up
the unanswerable arguments—

“ Goodness untried is not goodness, and virtue not virtue
unproved,

Through probation and trial are reached the heights of the
human.”

This the new version by the old Adversary—

“ Pretty child—play the love of these lovers—try them—

Set them apart—let their love be proved by exile and absence.”

Sweet were the days of their wooing, but wooing must come to an end.

What then ? Why marriage remained.

But how could they marry ?

The farms of the parents were small, and could not well be divided.

Parents were willing to share ; but Hector spurned their proposals.

Hector had brothers and sisters ; Alice had brothers and sisters.

Rob them of their rights ? He would not and could not :

It dawned on the mind of the man he must carve a way for himself.

She should not drudge as his wife, he would give her better surroundings :

He would find for his jewel, a setting fairer than barren hillsides.

A home for his bride ?

He looked on all sides debating the point in his mind—

The old world done and effete.

Stocked the professions, the avenues blocked with crowds of the needy.

Then ho ! for the new lands—

Fortunes were there for the making, for men of resolute will and iron endurance.

Elbowed out of their grooves, great hosts were seeking for new homes.

Not like the Norsemen of old these sturdy invaders :

Armed not with the bow and the spear, they went with
ploughs and with hoes, with the spade and the mattock :
None the less valorous they.

Resolve imparted to Alice.

She startled out of her dream of endless life wooing—
suddenly faced by the practical ;

Blushes and crimsons—he speaks of their wedding and
probable children :

Loves him the more for his forethought—

Quitting them all for her sake—the glen, the mountain, his
friends—cleaving only to her :

Admits he must go, but bursts into passionate weeping :

Follow sad days with the shadow of parting upon them :

Follows the day of farewell of the lovers, with tender em-
braces, and vows, and fond protestations.

Ho ! for the new lands, fair southern lands—lands of the
virginal acres ;

Lands of the miner and gold-fields ;

Lands of the savage, but not his by birthright ;

Lands that lie fallow, waiting and ripe for the users ;

Lands for the tillers and toilers.

With Hector a few busy years of toil and endurance.

Fortune, misfortune, crosses and losses, seasons of drought
and pestilence,

Cattle dying of dearth, sheep dying of rot, prospering
nothing :

Seasons of great recompense, sunny and prosperous years ;
The moderate competency gained ; a sum saved and sent
home—the passage money for Alice.

With Alice, the years slow gliding and lingering ;
The old round of work and amusement ;
The last has not the old zest—Hector away ;
Some solace to visit the old trysting places—
The walk by the river, the seat by the cascade, 'neath the
shade of the birches ;
Vain longing and looking up to the hill, over which he came
when she watched for his coming :
Episodes pleasant—the letters coming and going ;
The walks to the office, the tantalising post-mistress delaying
delivery ;
The reading of letters, and spreading the news ; keeping to
herself the tender asides ;
The important message arriving at last ; the passage money
provided ; a home and an impatient lover wearily waiting.

Another parting—Alice quitting the glen—
Parents escorting to city, to the side of the ship, give her
their blessings with tears—may never see her again.
With Alice, a neighbour and wife, invited by Hector—
They, too, seeking their fortunes.
On the pier the parents left standing, waving their hand-
kerchiefs ;
The ship—in the distance remote—vanishing, vanishing,
vanishing !

v.

“Bear thy burden bravely, O ship ;
Be smooth, O sea, for her sake ;
Blow gently, but strongly, O wind ;
Urge the great ship to her haven ;
Bring the bride to the arms of her lover.”

The lonely man still waiting—voyaging leisurely then—
The months are now as the years ;
Lonely he is, but still would be lonelier,
Society of helpers becoming distasteful—
How will Alice get on with these lumbering fellows ?
Was he selfish in bidding her come ?
She is leaving all for his sake,
Bringing herself to his arms.
Lonely he is, but still would be lonelier—
He steals to the room for Alice, daintily furnished,
Enters the holy of holies, closes the door, and sits in the
solitude.
In the room there are sprigs of the heather, and ferns from
the clefts in the rocks of the glen ;
Over the shelf by the fire-place the head and horns of a deer—
From his pocket a portrait he draws,
Gazing and gazing till Alice seems present beside him—
He feels as of old, the slight touch of her hand on his
shoulder,
The locks of her hair are brushing his cheek,
Her lips are bending towards him,

He turns round to clasp and embrace her—
Ah ! it is only a vision—a day-dream.

“Haste ! haste ! O ship !

Rich are your stores, and your cargo is heavy and precious ;
But they are as nothing to me,
There is only one precious on board, and that is my bride,
my bride !

Other souls you carry with you, other hearts may be anxiously
waiting ;

But they are as nothing to me :

Oh, my love, my love, sweetheart and lover of mine.

And yet forgive me, God, if I am selfish and blind.

Bless the others who wait, yet bless me, too, with my bride—

Haste, haste, O ship !”

Blissful dreams are the dreams of the lover,

The ship in vision he sees, onward serenely sailing—

Her sails swelled out, white as the wings of a dove, pure and
unsoiled as the soul of his Alice.

It is night on the sea, and the moonlight falls, and makes for
the ship a track and pathway of silver ;

Gently gliding the ship, urged by kind but invisible hands,
In her wake there is scarcely a ripple.

Dreadful dreams are the dreams of the lover.

He has dreams of storm and disaster,

Dreams of howling demoniac winds,

Dreams of devouring waves—a wild pack of wolves padding
the limitless waste, pitiless they as the pale rider Death,

Chasing the ship, in their jaws clutching and shaking her,
baffled, spitting their rage,
Dreams of the shuddering ship clearing herself from their
brutal assaults, flying, flying before them.

O bullying, blustering wind !
O cruel, cowardly Sea !
Back, Hell-hounds, and leave her alone,
Fasten your quarrel on me, harm not my harmless bride.
If I were but by her side, Wind, you might beat and blow ;
O sea ! were she safe in my arms, your black depths would
frighten not me ;
Were we together, my bride and I,
You might spread in your gulfs our bridal bed.

Sometimes he seeks the city and shore, and eagerly scans the
horizon,
Knows the ship is not due, yet self-deception is pleasant ;
“ It may be she has had an unusually prosperous voyage,
That speck may be her ; nay, but there is another ;
No, no, nothing is sure but my waiting,
Haste, haste, O ship ! ”

VI.

On board the ship, for Alice a new life and pleasant,
On the broad ocean the little band wedged in the ship become
a friendly commune,
Between them and death but a few thin planks at the best.
All become known, the history of each is related.

This mother is seeking her son, this father goes to his
daughter, Alice is seeking for Hector ;

Alice a favourite with all—the pride of the ship, as formerly
the pride of the glen.

Accustomed to language sincere, flattery seems true to the
ear of the maiden.

Civil to all, more civil to her the Captain.

Captain young and good-looking, sun-tanned,

Bold, self-reliant, to womanly graces susceptible,

Frank as a sailor should be,

Struck with the beauty of Alice,

Struck with her manner unassuming and modest, yet noway
abashed,

Walking queen-like amid her lady companions.

The voyaging leisurely then.

To her the Captain a pleasant companion,

Assiduously waiting upon her,

Noting the points of the route on the chart,

Here the shallows and rocks, there the fathomless depths ;

Showing the lights phosphorescent, the fish that can fly, the
tumbling porpoises, the fairy fleet of nautili,

The fin of the follower shark, the spouts of the sporting whales,

Overhead a speck in the sky, a lone albatross, wings out-
stretched, seemingly motionless.

Spectators look on in enjoyment, easy-minded and careless,
speculating result—

Hector or Captain, which ?
Toss up a coin at a venture,
For Hector a head—Ah ! it comes down a tail ;
The neighbours getting alarmed—but how interfere ?
The ways of the valley are not the ways of the world,
They will wait and look for a little.

A storm, a tempest at sea,
The Captain is seen at his best,
Like a mask his carelessness drops, and the masterful man is
revealed.
Sky darkens, sea rises, wind blows,
Now screaming and howling ; but his voice is heard through
it all, issuing commands, stern, sharp, and decisive.
One man against Nature, the elements hurling their forces
against him,
He knows them, has studied them long.
Every sign of the sky—every trick of the wind, and the break
of the treacherous seas.
For a time the ship and the sailors of his will are but the
embodiment :
It is he that baffles and dodges the savage force of the three
united against him—the sky, the storm, and the sea.
This man is a hero, is almost divine.
As far as is safe the maiden sees the encounter, the rest guesses
by the talk of the crew ;
Deep seated in her, despite the gentle outward appearance—
fiery impulses and high admiration of prowess, fervid
delight in deeds of daring and venture.

At her ear the old snake with subtle suggestions.

“Here is a brave and proper man,

Place your Hector beside him—

He with his mock heroical combats,

His triumphs o’er boyish companions—what are they to the
triumphs of him who contends with the wrath of the
wind, and the storm of the sea ?

And yet so gentle with you ;

But a word, and this man among men will lay himself at your
feet.”

At the ear of the Captain the tempter.

“This Hector, who is he ?

What right had he to win her simple affections ?

It was not the act of a man,

Choice she had none ; she knew not the world, and nothing
of men ;

She only now has a choice,

You do nothing unfair—he had his innings, take yours—

Let the worthiest win.”

Oftener together the two.

Neighbours remonstrance at last. “What would Hector think
of all this ?”

Pride of the maiden arises. “I will answer to Hector. Who
are you that dare interfere !”

All unconscious of wrong—

Self-will and the tempter urging her on.

Oftener together the two.

At length, to avoid comments, the eyes of the curious,
and the shrugs of onlookers, there are private and
clandestine meetings ;

They meet in the room of the Captain ;

So by steps insidious and slow the two together go down-
ward,

Till at last. Ah, at last !

Unseen and in secret.

Not unseen by the spiritual hosts,

The good angels standing abashed, shading their faces
ashamed with their wings,

Whispering, softly and low, "Fallen, lost, and undone."

The powers of evil triumphant,

The arch fiend at their head with a sneer on his face, pointing
downward the finger of scorn.

The Captain and Alice,

Now they know of their shame.

He has lost the robe of his honour, uprightness, fair dealing.

She has cast to the wind the white garb of her innocence,
holy and pure.

He feels himself lowered in her eyes—she feels herself
lowered in his.

He fain would be kind to her still ;

But she shrinks from his presence, speaks only when forced,
averting her eyes :

Pale, with a far-away look, she glides like a ghost by the side
of the neighbours ;

They gladly receiving her back to their friendship, thinking
their verdict was harsh—

Alice only meant to be civil.

Only wishing her spirits restored—the sight of the land will
do that.

On speed the days.

O for a sight of the land !

O for an infinite waste to lose herself in its wilds !

The sin only known to the two ere long will be known to the
world.

The constant thought in her mind—

Hector, how meet him ? She would rather meet God.

She looks o'er the side at the waves—the tempter again by
her side.

She shrinks back from their cold, staring, clear depths ;

They look like an infinite eye,

No place for her secret there,

They would spurn her back to the light, float her dead in her
shame, and proclaim her sin to the sun.

On speed the days.

Is there a refuge ? No, there is none,

She must unbosom herself—

They must meet Hector and tell him, and keep him from her—

She dare not meet him in wrath, in his righteous, indignant
wrath ;

Oft at the point of telling the matron, but cannot, ever
haunting her side.

(Unsuspecting her friends—it is only the qualms of the sea).

The last night on board,
Now it must be ; she will tell, she will tell ;
He will kill her, and yet if he does it would only be just,
and her death may atone for her sin.

The matron grasped at by Alice, she will not let her depart,
taken aside while the rest are pacing the deck ;

The story gasped out amid convulsions and sobs :

“ I dare not meet Hector. Will you ?

I am unworthy of him.

Tell him his Alice is dead, dead, dead, utterly dead,
That she who walks in her shape is worthless and vile.”

“ Are you mad, Alice ? What mean you ?”

The sin and the secret is fully revealed.

Horror-stricken and blanched the face of the matron

“ O Hector ! O Alice ! O God !

Would you have me murder the man ?

Tell him ? How can I ?

You the light of his eyes ! the hope of his life !”

“ Tell him you must, and do not spare me.

Call me what you will—abandoned, profligate, lost—

If it will lessen his grief and his love.

Let him thank God that I am revealed—

Revealed while yet it is time, and he has not a wanton for
wife, who might have brought shame to his name.

Tell him I nightly pray God—will the good God listen to
me ? that he may be led to forget.

And yet, and yet, 'tis the wage of my sin, that I can never forget, his worth and his love, that I flung like baubles aside.

Matron confides to her husband,
Gives o'er the mission to him—no tale for a woman to tell to a man.

He wrathful, indignant at first, "Let the wanton tell him herself."

At last for the sake of Hector consents.

VII.

Hector anxiously waiting—the ship expected for days ;
To wed them in town a parson prepared—he will carry her off as his bride.

He has brought from their home a team and a wagon,
Furnished with fleeces the whitest, and fur skins—
The roadway is rough, and the waggon might happen to jostle—

Pure white are the steers, fit for a bridal procession.

Nearing the pier, passengers clustering on deck.
Where can she be ?

His heart gives a leap. There she is ! Ah, no, it is not !
Scanning again. Alice nowhere to be seen,
Apprehension rising within him—

Is she sick ? Is she dead ?
Passengers trooping on shore,
Among them no Alice.

The friend not perceived till his hand is laid on the shoulder of Hector.

He starts at the touch and grasps at the hand.

“Cameron! Thank God! But tell me of Alice.”

“Hector, be calm, I have a message and tidings of sorrow.”

“Heavens! is she dead? Out with it, man, I cannot bear the suspense.”

“No, dead she is not. I have a message from her.”

“Not dead and not here? Cameron, you jest, and this is no time for your fooling.”

“Hector, I will tell you in private, not here; but, my friend, be prepared for the worst.”

A room in an inn.

The tidings of evil imparted,

The strong man struck to the heart, staggers and swoons,

Revives again, paces the room, clenching his hands and his teeth,

Sinks to a seat, buries his face in his hands,

Great throbs heaving his breast, shaking his frame,

Lips twitching, great lumps in his throat.

Friend sorrowfully looking on, almost as sick as himself, feeling how impotent comforting words.

How long, how long, they cared and they knew not,

Minutes lengthen to days in the tragical epochs of life.

Hector rises at length, and gathers himself together; is strangely calm and collected.

“Cameron, forgive, if I have forgotten you.

The dream of my life is shattered and ended,
My heart is left to me desolate,
But women drivel and weep, and I must still be a man.
But one service more. Show me this Captain."

"The Captain ! Madness !
Revenge yourself, and be hanged for the deed.
Leave him alone to his God."

"Be easy, my friend, I mean him no harm,
I would not injure a hair of his head ; Alice has loved him.
Show me the Captain."

The two confronted—the injured, the injurer.
Never again shall the Captain feel as he felt ; no, not even
at last when called by the trumpet to judgment.
Unquailed he had faced peril and danger, looked death in
the face, but he quailed before Hector,
He had robbed himself of his manhood.

The interview—

"I am the man you have injured.
You have done me the foulest wrong one man can do to
another, you have stolen my bride from me :
But I need not further upbraid.
You owe me some reparation ;
Are you sorry for what you have done ?"
"If words are of any avail, be assured I am heartily sorry ;
but what use are meaningless words ?
I would give my all to undo the harm that has been done.
I have lowered myself to the world,

I have lowered myself to you,
Worst of all, I have lowered myself to myself ;
Blame not your Alice, it was I that led her astray by planned
and artful temptations.

I feel like a devil that smirches a soul when I see her glide
by like a ghost, spurning me and my comfort together."

"Would you atone for what you have done ?"

"Gladly. Show me a way to atone."

"You will marry the girl you have wronged."

"Is that all you ask ? At once, if Alice consents."

"And being married to her, you will be kind to her, tender
and true ?"

"So helping me, God, I will."

"Amen. So helping you, God. Then in time I may forget
and forgive—the words would be mockery now."

VIII.

So the matter ended—a comedy bordering on tragedy ;
The marriage required but little change of details.
Instead of Hector, the name of the Captain was written.

All to their several ways,
The Captain and Alice to home and to wedlock.
Were they happy ? Never completely.
The Captain was tender and true, Alice attentive and
faithful,
But ever between them the image of Hector, the injured,
arose.
When their lips met, other lips were there also ;

When their hands clasped, other hands were there also.
Her duty, her service, the Captain's ; her heart, her soul, her
affection, her lover's :
Ever haunting her mind the far away glen, her troth, and
pledges of love so ruthlessly broken.
This was their punishment—
In the eyes of men their marriage was valid, in the eyes of
God it was not, and they knew it.

To his farming went Hector—not the Hector of old—
He was listless and reckless,
Sometimes drank and was boisterous :
Troubles like his do not pass and leave a man as he was.

His love—was it all expended for nothing ?
Not an atom of matter is ever lost sight of, is ever reduced
into nothingness—
Are love and affection less real than matter ?
Are they not the salt of the earth, the cords that bind men
and worlds together ?
Love—can you handle it ? Can you touch God ? Love none
the less real than He.
Once born it can never die—can never be utterly lost.
Somewhere, and somehow we know not, the real Alice awaits
Hector ;
The pure Alice of old escaped from the frailties of flesh.
The bridegroom will yet clasp his bride to his bosom.

❧ H Y M N S ❧



Elisha.

AT early morn he rose,
And looking forth he found
The Prophet's angry foes
The city 'compassed round ;
The trembling servant stood dismayed,
He thought the man of God betrayed.

The fearless Prophet prayed
Before his enemies ;
And, lo ! for war arrayed
Unto his servant's eyes
The watchful hosts of Heaven appear,
To save him and the holy seer.

So thou, O ! weary heart,
When foes around thee rise,
And craven fears upstart
To seal or blind thine eyes,
Turn not a coward from the fight,
But ask from Heaven the clearer sight

Pray for the deeper gaze,
The sp'ritual vision keen,

To pierce beyond the haze—
The mists that intervene ;
So thou the things of God may'st know
Around, within, this world of show.

Tread'st thou the narrow path ?
Then thou art safe from harm.
Fear not thine en'mies' wrath ;
Strength shall be given thine arm.
Know, weary heart, whate'er betide,
The hosts of Heaven are by thy side.

Though not to eye of sense
Their marshalled ranks appear,
Their strength'ning influence
Shall make them ever near ;
The faith that prompts thee on the road,
Sure 'tis th' upholding arm of God.

Do not for safety seek
Although the battle's long ;
The Good is never weak,
The Evil never strong ;
Still Right and Rectitude prevail,
And God and Goodness never fail.

O learn the higher faith—
Ranked on the side of Good ;
Care not for self or scaith,
For blows or buffets rude.
If thou should'st fall or vanquished be,
Thou fallest for God's victory.

Bethel.

STILL doth the golden ladder
Extend from earth to sky,
Seen in the ages olden
By Jacob's wond'ring eye ;
Still in our nightly visions,
When we are most alone,
It beams before us brightly,
A highway to the throne.

Though earthly is its foothold,
The stars upon it wait,
And lend to it their radiance
On to the golden gate.
And up this ladder golden
Went Enoch, loved of God,
And on it in his chariot
Elijah heavenward rode.

Still by its steps descending
Come angel messengers,
Leaving their heavenly places
To be our ministers.
Their words are words of healing,
Of purity and peace,
They breathe of heaven's guerdon
Of rescue and release.

Rising amid the Babel
Of earth's discordant cries,
Through it there come vibrating
Celestial melodies.
And though to souls all lifeless,
Impalpable as air,
To loving souls it real is
And true as faith and prayer.

It is the medium glorious
Of intercourse with God,
By weary souls and longing
Its steps are often trod.
Each step an aspiration—
A warm, sincere desire ;
The soul uplifted God-ward
Above the earth and mire.

Yea, still for souls aspiring,
This golden ladder is
A sure and steady pathway
To peace and happiness ;
Where angels are in waiting
To guard the stumbling feet,
To guide the weak and fainting
Unto the mercy-seat.

Pisgah.

THE agèd seer of Israel stood
And gaz'd o'er Canaan's land,
While far beneath his solitude
Lay Israel's waiting band.

Theirs was the hope of peaceful rest,
By weary wanderings won,
And his the agony of breast
And thoughts of deeds undone.

O, Heaven, if thou for us hast willed
Few days and incomplete,
Hopes shattered, broken, unfulfilled,
Give us a spirit meet.

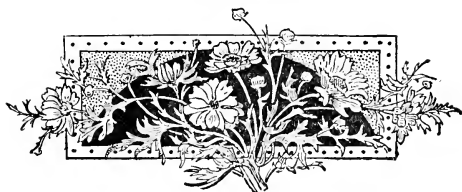
May we with cheerfulness resign
The arms we may not wield ;
Our strength, our fervour, Heaven, are thine—
These at Thy word we yield.

Though why we leave th' unfinished task
We may not comprehend,
We will the Almighty Worker ask
The task for us to end.

For Heavenly Truth is greater still
Than all her servants are ;
Nor selfish pride, nor stubborn will,
May in her service war.

She ends not with our little hour,
And her strong battle cry
Shall ever gather new-born power,
Though we in silence lie.

And other arms for her shall wage
The conflict o'er the sod
That hides us from life's fretful rage—
At home, at rest with God.



Tabor.

GO not to Palestine
In search of Tabor's hill,
Nor think denied to hearts like thine
Is Tabor's sacred thrill.
By thee sincerely sought,
Its pure and ambient air
May in a realm of holy thought
Surround thee everywhere.

O would'st thou then ascend
Unto God's holy hill,
Go thou in faith, and lowly bend
To ask the chastened will.
Should answer thee be given,
When faith has made thee whole,
Then wilt thou find a constant heaven
Dwells in the cleansèd soul.

No longer low, purblind,
Grovel 'mid transient things,
But seek the all-embracing mind
That sp'ritual vision brings ;
O mount that sacred height
And view supremely fair
The beauty of the Infinite
Through its enchanted air.

Revealed is Nature then,
Her purpose and her goal,
And seen through her and God-like men
The universal soul.
'Tis then that Virtue gleams
Bright through her mean attire,
And Goodness with resplendent beams
Shows her celestial fire.

'Tis there the good and great
Come from the shadowy sphere,
And on thee as attendants wait,
To stimulate and cheer.
Immortally survive
Their deeds in blossom there,
Whose glorious lustre bids thee strive,
And prompts to do and dare.

Ah, but such moments thou
Wilt find but passing rare ;
For thou must leave the mountain's brow,
And breathe a denser air.
O when upon the plain
Amid earth's vanities,
To hallow life, strive to retain
Lone Tabor's ecstasies.

FRAGMENTS



Philip.

THE King Cophetua loved a maid—
A beggar maid of low degree ;
A prince, too, polished, highly bred,
Changed Cinderella's misery ;
But she is daughter to the Squire,
And I am Philip Aimer's heir.

Yes, I am but a cinder knight,
Of anvil and the bellows lord,
Who love the princess Alice hight.
How would she of her scorn accord,
Were she confessor to my sin,
And knew the secret lodged within ?

Yet hereby I, son of the smith,
To whom it may concern declare,
Though come of humble kin and kith,
I love the heiress Alice fair ;
My heritage an honest name,
Good looks, lithe limbs, and sturdy frame.

A prince can raise, so it is said,
A woman to his own degree ;
But woe betide the love-lorn maid
Who bends beneath her dignity ;
Who loves a lad of no estate,
And makes of him her lord and mate.

Away those dreams—they come again,
That danger never will be hers ;
Yet though I hold them false and vain,
I love these dangerous visitors—
Dreams, dreams, as baseless as the air,
And yet without them life were bare.

Yet, mark you, she is kind to me,
Frank, open, and unembarrassed ;
Pshaw ! that but shows her mind is free,
That love has never her harassed ;
She means nought when she condescends,
Her courtesy to all extends.

And so her very goodness is
A fault I wish she could repair ;
For love, indeed, is selfishness,
And aught of his he will not share ;
But what is his must be his own,
Sacred, secured to him alone.

Strange paradox, I dread because
 Her manner is so very free ;
 Yet were it changed from what it was,
 And should she shun me openly—
 Become reserved—a haughty dame—
 Should I believe her free from blame ?

Is it impossible to find
 Men guileless as the knights of old,
 Who never sought reward in kind,
 Content to leave their love untold ;
 Who loved and worshipped from afar,
 As one would reverence a star ?

Ah, could I reach a height like this ;
 Or is that nature but depraved
 Where some return in tenderness
 Is looked for, longed for, deeply craved ?
 And would it be a damning sin,
 Did I dear Alice woo and win ?

Little she knows how oft at night
 I stand in secret in the park
 And watch, and watch her window light,
 And watch her shadow in the dark,
 Till lights go out, and I am left
 Alone, forsaken, and bereft.

Then from my heaven the stars rush out,
And I am left within the gloom,
Abandoned in a world of doubt,
And darkness dreadful as the tomb ;
The light of life has fled and gone,
And I am left alone, alone.

Little she knows how rapt I sit
And watch her face on Sabbath days,
While happy fancies flit and flit,
As the old pastor preaches, prays.
I hear not, only worship her—
The one saint in my calendar.

And yet I love the sacred Word,
Which tells us of one flesh and blood
Are all mankind, though in discord
They dwell, and not in brotherhood ;
Somehow it brings her nearer me,
This doctrine of equality.

I have beheld a picture fair—
A picture of the angel "Faith,"
Who, over rocks and deserts bare,
With naked feet, yet free from scaith,
Trod on, with steadfast, trustful eyes
Turned ever on the smiling skies.

And she was leading on a knight—
An arméd knight, who stumbling strode,
His eyes turned downward from the light
Upon the dangers of the road ;
And Alice has the trustful eye
Of Faith, I would the knight were I.

And yet it could not be, for, led
By that dear hand, I never would
Look downward, with distrustful head ;
But, looking in her eyes, I should
“ See Heaven there, no trouble know,
And on through life in gladness go.”



Alice.

[FIND the world a pleasant place,
I love our simple village ways.
Why should folks wear a gloomy face,
And mope and whimper all their days ;
Be crabbed and peevish, boorish, rough ?—
To me to live is joy enough.

To live and breathe the fragrant air
A bounteous hand diffused abroad,
With every living thing to share
The goodness of a gracious God,
To strive in all humility
To be as God would have me be—

Free, unaffected, natural,
Lowly, resigned to Heaven's will—
To live and be beloved by all,
Each day with pleasant works to fill—
To live to make rough places plain
For those distressed, and those in pain :

To lay me down content at night,
When done the duties of the day,
Within the peace-diffusing light—
The far-off planet's mellow ray ;
To feel the calm the soul distils
Within the shadow of the hills—

The abiding hills, whose shadow rests
For ever on our window panes ;
The abiding hills, whose purple crests
Reach to the eternal calm which reigns
In upper air, and bring to me
The thoughts of heaven's felicity.

Sometimes a straggling visitor
Into our quiet vale intrudes,
Who pines and mourns the lack of stir,
And, sickening of our solitudes,
Longs for the pleasures he has known—
Longs for the world of his own.

I could not love the other world
That cousin Emily told me of,
Though oft at ours her lips she curled,
And at my tastes would sneer and scoff—
Flowers, grass, streams, country walks, and so,
Were very good, but awful slow.

Ecstatic folk might rave of these ;
She could not be so insincere :
She spoke her mind, think what we please ;
She would have died if settled here.
No, simple joys were not for her,
For her the town life and the stir.

These known—I would not be content
To stay immured in prison here,
In a perpetual banishment,
So far from woman's proper sphere ;
Where crowds to do her homage wait,
Where people live—not vegetate.

Some one must dawdle at her train,
Or else she sour, morose, became ;
No matter who—a simple swain
Would do in lieu of higher game ;
But woe betide the unhappy one
Who her advances dared to shun.

Poor Philip Aimer specially
Became the object of her hate,
For, while he gave her courtesy,
Him she could ne'er infatuate ;
And glances which she did not spare
Were answered with indifferent air.

How it was so I cannot state,
He so attentive is to me,
And never stays and hesitates
Whene'er he can of service be ;
But we have friends been all our days,
And know so well each other's ways.

So 'twas I did not feel ashamed
When she sneered at my knight-errant ;
The village Orson I had tamed
To anticipate my every want ;
For all the while she tried her best
To put his knightship to the test.

She knew the reason now, she said,
I met the children from the school,
And petted them, and why I played
The village Lady Bountiful,
And visited the lowly haunts,
And waited on the poor folks' wants.

These were the opportunities
I made for meeting clandestine,
In safety out of father's eyes—
This boorish, landless squire of mine :
I only laughed, with all her art,
Old friends like us she cannot part.

For Philip he is manly, good,
Why should I look on him in scorn,
Although he came of common blood,
And was not in the purple born ?
If Philip prizes smiles from me
Then I will all the prouder be.

But only evil minds like hers
 Could judge ill of our intercourse ;
To meet me Philip never stirs,
 We never meet except perforce
At church, or when he's bound to wait
And let me pass the village gate.

How can one live when every thought
 Is "What do people think of me?"
When every look is learned by rote,
 And every smile is falsity ;
When every attitude and air
Is previously rehearsed with care.

Who could suspect her languid eyes,
 Her careful negligence of dress,
Her startled look, her blush, surprise,
 Her studied air of artlessness.
Does the great world crush out the heart ?
Must every woman play a part ?

But father laughs at me, and says
 That I have learned the sorry trick
Of critics, practised in such ways,
 Who judge a building from a brick :
I must not hate the world by her,
Or judge all from our visitor.

And further, father jokes—"Beware,
The leaven of the Pharisees
Has crept upon you unaware :
Who would have thought it would you seize ?
Methink you in the spirit say,
'Thank God, I have not Emily's way.'"

Perhaps 'tis true. Yes, father's right ;
I feel that spirit grow in me,
That sin of most insidious might—
The sin which apes humility ;
'Tis very easy to be good
Where one is prized and understood.

Have I been to my father kind,
Who is so watchful for my care ?
Does he have aught upon his mind—
Some trouble I should learn to share ?
For sometimes when I speak by chance
He seems to wake from out a trance.

Although he is the Squire—although
He is the lord of all the lands—
I've seen, in times of dearth and snow,
Storm-stayed in barns a gipsy band,
With scanty fare, yet full of glee,
And happier far at heart than he.

Can it be Sneak ? I do not know ;
I think he dreads his visits here ;
It may be, and I fancy so ;
But should he never reappear—
Should Sneak not trouble us again,
It would not give me any pain.

For after these long interviews
He has apart with lawyer Sneak,
He seeks his room, will food refuse,
Becomes pale, helpless, limp, and weak,
And knits his brows and bleeds his lips,
And bites in thought his finger tips.

Perhaps I do not judge Sneak right ;
But him instinctively I dread,
And wish he never crossed my sight ;
Although he is in manner bred,
Is courteous, affable, and bland,
I shudder when I touch his hand.



The Squire.

THE poorest knave, the meanest hind,
Who daily earns a sorry fee,
Possessor of a vacant mind—
Uncultured, ignorant, and free—
Whose pillow knows no troubled dream,
The happiest man of all, I deem.

Yet those are mine—that mansion fair,
That avenue of stately trees—
That spreading glebe where flocks repair,
And nibbling wander at their ease,
Yet would I give the world to be
A peasant born, and poor and free.

Yes, they are mine—at least in name—
The world does not know as yet
My only heritage was shame—
A mass of mortgages and debt.
Lord am I still, not of fair lands,
But lord of these two idle hands.

But Sneak, so suave whene'er I send—
That man of honour unimpinged.
Though lowly he may beek and bend,
And in my presence seem unhinged,
He knows the secret of my state,
He is my providence—my fate.

Ay, well he knows—the fawning knave—

He holds a sword above my head,
At will can smite, at will can save,

At will deny my daily bread,
At will can make me doff my plume,
And don and wear it in my room.

As yet he but “submits,” “suggests,”

Whene’er he wants to work his will.
When will his language reach “requests?”

When will the dread become the ill?
I know not, but I curse the hour
Which made me panderer to his power.

I loathe his touch. It makes me wince—

I feel the iron ’neath the glove,
And only with due vigilance

I look as meek as any dove.
O Alice, daughter dear, my own,
Were I but in the world alone.

’Tis something to have ancestors

Placed high above the baser sort ;
’Tis something when one’s noble sires
Could judge infallibly old port,
Could gamble, hunt, and curse and shout,
And cultivate the family gout.

Thanks from my heart, my ancestors,
 With souls above all work and toil.
Thanks from my heart, my noble sires,
 Too proud to interfere with toil,
Who left the lowly and the meek
To inherit earth like lawyer Sneak.

What were they worth ?—pure blood and rank,
 A large estate and spreading lands.
If one must potter with a bank,
 If one must soil his dainty hands,
When one can buy a lawyer's brain,
Why should foul ink the fingers stain ?

My father lived just like the rest—
 He hunted, ate, and drank his fill,
For small details he had no zest,
 But left them to his lawyers' skill.
Where could he better counsel seek
Than that supplied by Sneak & Sneak ?

Great Sneak the sire, small Sneak the son,
 For they, too, had a pedigree,
A family tree whose trunk ran down
 Till it was lost in mystery ;
A race of men who grew and fed
Like fungi on the dank and dead.

Long 'stablished in the country town,
A pettifoggering family,
With old traditions handed down
Of law and law's chicanery,
Yet none for rank respect could seek
Unless they had the adjunct, Sneak.

Sharp-visaged men, with foxy eyes,
And calculating humble air,
Well stocked with sympathetic sighs
Should clients' woes require their care—
Unostentatious, lowly, meek,
The deferential race of Sneak.

Reputed rich, yet none e'er knew
The latent sources of their wealth ;
They boasted not of revenue,
But unctuously thanked God for health ;
Thanked Heaven if still remaining poor,
Their honest name was still secure.

So well they might, for rumours ran,
And ugly whispers, " Birds of prey,
Whene'er there falls a ruined man,
Be sure they are not far away."
Still none could point to fault or flaw,
They were so learned in the law.

They lived these down, all men could say
 They were but Ruin's ministers,
Who helped the spendthrifts on the way
 They had gone without scriveners ;
And men forgive much the astute,
So they lived on in fair repute.

So happened it, that old Sneak died,
 And gathered to his legal sires,
He left young Sneak alone in pride
 To keep alive the family fires ;
Endowed with all his deeds and files,
His boxes, wills, and parchment piles.

My father, too, departed earth,
 Lusty and boastful to the last,
Proud of his lineage and birth,
 And proud of his ancestors past,
Gave up his sports with much regret,
And left his son his all—his debt.

Time passed, and yet the blow ne'er fell—
 The crash that devastated life ;
The scrivener kept the secret well
 Till I had woo'd and won my wife—
My dear Rebecca, belle and pride,
And fairest of the country side.

Not till my death will I forget
The day, the hour. There came a note,
A common-looking missive, yet
It ran not in the usual rote,
“I must see you in town this week,
Make haste and come.—Yours truly, Sneak.”

I went ; in speech he seemed to halt,
His air more servile than before,
Then mumbled, “ ’Twas your father’s fault,
Your case I very much deplore.”
“What fault ? Why all this mystery ?
And why expend your sympathy ?”

And then his power of speech came back ;
With wonted fawning fluency
He told me I had scarce a plack,
My lands were gone to beggary !
There might be left a pittance spare,
With strict economy and care.

Perhaps his father was to blame ;
He had a weakness, had old Sneak,
Which loved to spare a noble name,
And buttress it where it was weak,
And so my sire had never known
His wealth had taken wings and flown.

He would have helped me yet himself,
But really it was past his power ;
Not that he cared for sordid pelf,
But at the bank they looked so sour,
And grumbled at the backward state
His cash account stood in of late.

Parchments and deeds he had arrayed
Upon his desk, in order trim,
Ledgers, bills docqueted and paid ;
But I could only stare at him,
Shocked, stupefied, and in a maze,
Things seemed to glimmer through a haze.

I surely must have sickened, when
Young Sneak appeared colossal size
To my confused, disordered brain,
A spider with two odious eyes
That glared at me, stretched as the dead
Within a mesh of slimy thread.

I handled not the tangled skein ;
I needed air and sought the door,
To shun the sympathetic mien
Young Sneak on such occasions wore.
How I reached home I never knew,
For everything seemed turned askew.

Thank God, my wife, Rebecca, died,
And never knew the bitter pinch
Of poverty, of wants denied,
And never felt the cruel wrench
Of comforts ta'en, and household gods,
Which sweeten life in our abodes.

She died, and I was left alone—
Alone with Alice for my care ;
Alone, 'twas better so, alone.
Could she have borne the chilly air—
The keen blasts of adversity—
That fragile flower of luxury ?

If this be life, then I live on
To practise small economies,
To tread with helpless steps upon
The ground where hid volcano lies,
To linger in a living trance,
And wait the coming avalanche.

Sneak is my fate, the scrivener ;
'Tis he staves off the evil hour,
Keeps this and that stern creditor
From doing what lies in their power ;
And yet, although he looks so meek,
I think my creditors are—Sneak.

My kinsmen do not fraternise,
 They dropped their visits long ago,
Expressing wonder and surprise
 That I, the Squire, have changed so,
Become morose, and greedy, cold,
Unlike the hearty Squires of old.

Why is the thunderbolt delayed ?
 What hinders Sneak ?—he loves me not ;
Perhaps some other scheme is laid—
 A deeper and a darker plot.
O God of love and mercy mild,
All that I pray is, spare my child.

What matters it if I can be
 Within the storm a hiding-place,
A covert, Alice dear, to thee ;
 Beat wind, and batter form and face,
I care not, if thou find'st a rest,
A shelter sure, in this lone breast.



Letter from the Country.

DEAR Phil, 'tis not often I write,
But I have something to tell
I am somewhat afraid to indite,
For, Philip, I know you so well ;
Need it give you any surprise
If you find your mother had eyes.

The news are concerning the Hall :
The Squire is going to leave
His home, his country, and all,
And Alice—how will you receive
The news—goes off with the Squire ;
So we lose both the daughter and sire.

Methinks I see you turn white,
For I noticed how often before,
When Alice was passing in sight,
How you watched through window and door,
And I saw the love in your eyes,
And your blush, and hearkened your sighs.

How it all came about, do you ask ?
It seems the Squire was in debt,
And Sneak, with the meek, lowly mask,
And face so inscrutably set,
Was the real lord of the land,
And the Squire was his to command.

There has been a terrible scene,
 There were words about Alice, they say ;
And moved with the deepest chagrin
 When the Squire answered him “ Nay ;”
Sneak sneered at his beggarly pride,
And warned him of what would betide ;

Till the Squire could bear him no more,
 Seized Sneak by the shoulders and ran
The lawyer outside of the door.
 Then Sneak showed a different man,
His colours came out at their worst,
How he stamped, how he stormed, how he curst.

But now that he is rid of the yoke,
 The Squire wears a different face,
Walks upright, and sometimes will joke
 At what some would count his disgrace,
At the passing away of his lands
To the grasp of a stranger's hands.

There are hints that he will get back
 A part of Sneak's ill-gotten gains ;
Clear brains have been put on his track,
 And speak of penalties, pains,
Of deeds which border on crime ;
I'm afraid Sneak will have a bad time.

Already he sees his mistake,
And fain would fawn on the Squire,
And wonders their friendship should break,
In the flame of a moment's fire ;
But the Squire is determined to go,
And to all his advances says "No."

Says he : "Shall a man give his soul,
And all the soul prizes on earth,
For the sake of an ancestral roll ?
What is pride, and what is it worth ?
Give me rather the pride which is born
Of a spirit which dependence would scorn."

Had he only been flung in the stream
Of life, as we poor folks are flung,
He might have been better, I deem ;
But his birth upon him was flung
Like a heavy millstone round his throat,
And with it how could he float ?

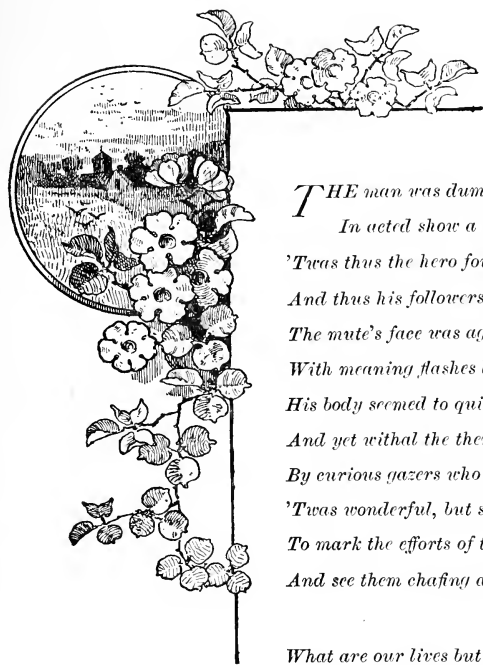
O Phil, we sometimes repine
At the lot God gives us on earth,
I sometimes quarrel with mine—
Have a sneaking fondness for birth,
For pomp and splendour and show—
Like the most of women, you know.

But pedigree sometimes may mean
Nothing more than a slow working brain.
And the wits are nimbler and keen
When one has to struggle and strain ;
When the prize which we pant for is won,
The zest and the pleasure are gone.

THE END.

The end of all 'tis easy to forecast—
They passed away, the two to distant lands,
And Philip, sick of heart, went after them,
And laboured for his love, like Israel ;
Until the sire, for love of her and love
Of him who lent his strength to theirs
To build a home again in a new world,
Bestowed his blessing, and the two were wed.





*THE man was dumb, but there he stood and gave
In acted show a ballad from a poet—
'Twas thus the hero fought, 'twas thus he died,
And thus his followers looked on and wept.
The mute's face was aglow, his eyes were charged
With meaning flashes like electric sparks ;
His body seemed to quiver utterance,
And yet withal the theme was vaguely grasped
By curious gazers who knew not the poem.
'Twas wonderful, but somewhat pitiful,
To mark the efforts of the imprisoned thoughts,
And see them chafing at the bars of speech.*

*What are our lives but that mute's agony?
A longing to express the unexpressible,
Wherein our souls beat at the bars of sense
And strive for freer, surer utterance
In nobler action, more exalted speech.
O Lord, be Thou a kind interpreter ;
Judge rather by the impulse that inspires,
Not by words said, but by words unexpressed,
Not by the lives we lead, but rather by
The lives we strive, and vainly strive, to live.*

"THE NEW JERUSALEM."

"SPECTRE CLOCK OF ALYTH."

PRESS OPINIONS, &c.

Our author has various moods: The extracts I have given in previous papers are examples of what I certainly consider his best style. They manifest all through a spirit of earnestness, touched here and there with gleams of righteous indignation, which is never misdirected. But he has other moods; one is—When having dropped the mantle of the censor, he comes out to sing, in a light and graceful style, of subjects totally unconnected with grave and deep questions of truth and error, such as "Pygmalion" and other pieces among his "Verses in Scotch." About these I cannot now speak, save to remark that they are in every way satisfactory; the metre trips evenly and gracefully, and the subjects are handled with a light and playful humour, which is as fresh and natural as anyone could wish.—*From a Series of Articles on the "New Jerusalem" in the "Nottingham and Derby Home Reader."*

In many of these poems we find true humanity, a liquid movement both of feeling and expression, and a pathos that does not burn barrenly at the heart, but suffuses the fancy and the imagination.—*Edwards's "Modern Scottish Poets," Vol. I.*

This little work, "The Spectre Clock of Alyth," by the accomplished author of a volume of very thoughtful poems "The New Jerusalem," is "by ordinar'" in more ways than one. There is a concentration of thought, elegance, and finish about some of the pieces that many a poet of no mean eminence might envy.—*The Brechin Advertiser.*

In "The Spectre Clock of Alyth" Mr Geddes, the young writer who years ago delighted Dundonians with his "New Jerusalem," has published another volume which its many admirers will heartily welcome. Less controversial, perhaps, upon some debatable points than its predecessor, the present volume also gives proof of Mr Geddes's wit and humour, broad sympathy, enlightened views of men and institutions; close observation and love of Nature in all her forms.—*Dundee Advertiser.*

Mr James Y. Geddes has brought out a little volume of verses, entitled "The Spectre Clock of Alyth," which deserves a word of commendation. It is not the first time he has appeared as a poet, and he possesses a fair share of the poetic gift. In the present little volume we feel particularly pleased with a "Summer Holiday," "Died on the Street," and "The Oldest Inhabitant," all marked by deep feeling, descriptive power, and poetic tenderness.—*Glasgow Herald.*

The poems in the present volume are characterised by some of the best qualities of the true poet. There are true poetic feeling, tenderness, and pathos displayed in several of the pieces.—*Dundee Courier and Argus*.

The stranger to the town and clock will have no difficulty in extracting both entertainment and information from Mr Geddes's poetry and prose.—*Scotsman*.

There are a number of miscellaneous pieces all of them breathing a genuine poetic spirit, and displaying much skill in versification.—*Perthshire Constitutional*.

"Thou Knowest" (included in "In the Valhalla") is one of the finest prayers ever uttered by human lips.—*Dundee Evening Telegraph*.

"The Spectre Clock of Alyth," though very readable, is by no means the best of these poems. I like the "Winter Scene" better. Indeed there are some fine lines in it.—*Dr Walter C. Smith*.

The author evinces the possession of considerable poetic insight and a facile power of expressing his thoughts not merely in rhyme but in "music garmented."—*People's Friend*.

The workmanship in some cases is much above the subject; in all cases the workmanship has a wealth, and freedom, and force about it which makes the pieces actually worth reading, for relief is to be found in them.—*A. Stephen Wilson*.

We are delighted to welcome a new volume of poetry by Mr Geddes. This is said advisedly. It is a hazardous thing to welcome poets in these days, but Mr Geddes is a poetic writer whom it is right to encourage. He is not a mere jingling rhymster, but a man of ideas. This volume ("Spectre Clock of Alyth") shows a decided advance on his last one; the thought is richer, more matured, and more varied.—*People's Journal*.

But humour, and humour of the healthiest kind, is not the only characteristic of Mr Geddes's poems. In many of them we have much quiet, natural pathos, and the expression of a heart in sympathetic touch with suffering humanity. The closing lines of "A Winter Scene," descriptive of the secret potentialities of winter, are particularly beautiful.—*Blairgowrie Advertiser*.

Strathmore is a "meet nurse for a poetic child." Mr Geddes has caught some of the inspiration. The spell of the charming neighbourhood has seized him, and with not a little genius he has wedded his thoughts to words which "half reveal and half conceal the thought within."—*Perthshire Advertiser*.

We have previously in this column favourably noticed Mr Geddes's work as a poet, and in the little book before us he fully maintains his name and fame. Mr Geddes has a happy knack of focussing his ideas, while the vein of humour which pervades some of his verses renders a perusal of his book both pleasant and enjoyable.—*Stirling Observer*.

THE BABES IN THE WOOD

A Cantata for Schools and Classes.

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Sol-fa, 3d.; Staff Notation, with Accompaniments, 1/.

Words of the Songs, 2/ per 100.

THIS Cantata opens with an Instrumental Introduction and March, followed by a tuneful chorus, "We are the lords of air." *Robin Redbreast, Lark, Wren, Crow, Ox-eye and Thrush*, assisted by the chorus, give descriptive songs, when the *King of birds* tells of the danger in which the Orphan Babes are placed. In the solo and chorus "You will, you can, you may," they resolve to protect the children who had been kind to them. *Uncle Redhead* next appears, and being in great straits for money to pay "The Milliner's Bill" (No. 9) he resolves to appropriate the inheritance of his orphan charges. The *Babes* ask for a holiday, and, on pretence of granting their desires, their uncle leads them into the depth of the forest. With duets and chorus, the action is carried along, suitable dialogues introducing the different musical Nos. With the chorus "Song of the Elves" the first part closes, and the second part commences with "Day is dying." The children are getting alarmed at their Uncle's absence and the darkness, when the watchful *Robin* thinks of calling *Red Riding Hood* to their rescue. She carries them off to her cottage, and the Birds pass sentence on the cruel uncle. Securing their freedom once more they hurry gleefully away, and the Cantata closes with their departing strains as given in the chorus "Now to our own domain."

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